A

Journal

OF

TWO YEARS' TRAVEL

IN

PERSIA, CEYLON,

ETC.

BY

ROBERT B. M. BINNING, ESQ.

Madras Civil Service.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is with considerable reluctance that the writer of the following leaves ventures on the somewhat hackneyed assurance, that when this Journal was penned, it was never intended for the public eye —but such an assurance is nevertheless strictly true. The circumstances which have led to its present appearance in print, may be briefly explained.

About the middle of the year 1850, the author was induced, or more properly speaking, compelled to quit India, by bad health; his constitution having become much impaired by a residence in a country, where existence is passed, as the old lady in Boz's story describes it, in "living on a sand-heap beneath a burning-glass:" and a change of scene and climate having become necessary, he was by no means sorry when a sen-

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tence of two years' leave of absence from the torrid clime of Southern India, on Medical Certificate, was passed on him.

In fulfilment of a promise made to a dear relative in Britain, these pages, containing a Journal of nearly two years' travel, were indited. They were hurriedly written in the form of letters, from the various parts of the countries in which the writer then happened to be; and consequently it will be no matter of surprize should their contents occasionally appear ill-digested, and their style abrupt and unpolished.

After his return to England, in the course of the present year, the author happened to show his epistolary diary to his old friend and preceptor Dr. Duncan Forbes, Professor of Oriental Languages in King's College, London; who at once recommended its being published (recent events having awakened some public interest in regard to Persia), and, having offered it to the acceptance of the present Publishers, very kindly undertook to prepare it for the Press, by dividing the Letters, which were of irregular and inconvenient length, into more suitable Chapters and Paragraphs; and suggesting a few other improve-

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ments, necessary to the artistic appearance of a book.

The writer cannot but be sensible that had he bestowed more time and attention on his literary labours, he might have journalized in a fashion better worthy of perusal; but as first impressions, jotted down on the spot, are generally the best, being the freshest, he will be content to allow his Journal to appear before the bar of the Public, as it is, with all its imperfections on its head.

R. M. B.

November 15th, 1856.

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Page 8,	Line 4,	......*for*	"civilised"	*read*	"civilized."
„ 8,	„ 4,	...... „	"Christianised"...	„	"Christianized."
„ 8,	„ 5,	...... „	"evangelisation" .	„	"evangelization."
„ 8,	„ 6,	...... „	"civilisation"......	„	"civilization."
„ 48,	„ 2,	...... „	"Honourable"	„	"late Mr."
„ 48,	„ 28,	...... „	"civilised".........	„	"civilized."
„ 97,	„ 19,	...... „	"baptising"	„	"baptizing."
„ 99,	„ 1,	...... „	"paganise"	„	"paganize."
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„ 119,	„ 5, 8, 14...	„	"civilisation"	„	"civilization."
„ 119,	„ 20, 26 ...	„	"civilised".........	„	"civilized."
„ 164,	„ 2,	...... „	"demoralisation" .	„	"demoralization."
„ 165,	„ 4,	...... „	"civilised".........	„	"civilized."
„ 318,	„ 1,	...... „	"*keiolola*"	"	"*keiloola.*"
„ 383,	„ 12,	...... „	"nearly"...........	"	"fully."
" 383,	„ 14,	...... „	"1242"	"	"1258."

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JOURNAL

OF

TRAVELS,

&c.

PART I.—CEYLON.

CHAPTER I.

Passage from Madras to Ceylon.—The Town of Galle and its Environs.—Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants both European and Native.—The Boodhist Religion and Priesthood.

A STEAM voyage of between sixty and seventy hours, from Madras (where I embarked July 10th, 1850) to Point de Galle, will rarely present any feature or incident worth recording, particularly to one whose lot it has been, as in my case, to travel much and frequently in this manner. A brief passage of somewhat less than three days' duration being therefore a subject on which I feel my inability to enlarge with any chance of

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success, I shall take the liberty of passing it over without further notice, and proceed at once to give an account of my own proceedings and observations in this island as well as I can manage under all the manifold disadvantages arising from delicate health.

The roadstead of Galle affords a beautiful prospect. The town and inner harbour are surrounded by hills, covered with the most luxuriant jungle; and the greater part of the low ground is likewise occupied by forest, among which the cocoanut, areca palm, bread-fruit, and jack, are most conspicuous. The roads in and about the fort are shaded with rows of trees, and the entire scene wears a universal hue of green foliage, which is quite refreshing to the eye, after the sandy arid plains and dirty rice swamps of Arcot and Madras. The harbour is an excellent one, but requires to be entered with some care, as there are many sunken rocks about its mouth.

The fort, which is considerably upwards of a mile in circumference, stands upon a rocky peninsula, on the west side of the inner harbour. This fort was first built by the Portuguese, and afterwards rebuilt by the Dutch, who had dismantled it when they stormed Galle, and wrested it from their rivals, in 1640. Considerable additions have since been made by the English, to whom Galle was given up in 1796. The fort contains upwards of 500 houses and a garrison.

On approaching the beautiful Cinnamon Isle,

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the steamer was speedily surrounded by boats and Cingalese canoes. These latter are of a construction so singular as to deserve special mention. The canoe peculiar to Ceylon consists of a hollowed tree, from twenty to thirty feet in length, and having long planks fastened lengthways above, so as to form the sides of the vessel, which is about three feet deep and scarcely two feet in breadth. An outrigger, consisting of a log of wood (made in the same form as the canoe, but not hollowed, and about half the size of the vessel to which it is attached), is fastened alongside, at a distance of about six feet from the canoe, by two arched poles of bamboo. This outrigger effectually prevents all possibility of the canoe's upsetting; and without it, a bark so long and narrow could not continue upright even in the calmest sea. The vessel is, moreover, provided with two slender masts, which support a large sail. Both masts and sail can be unshipped at a moment's notice. The canoe can be managed by two persons, but it is usually manned by three or four. There is no distinction of stem and stern, both ends of the canoe and outrigger being formed alike, so that it will sail either way without requiring to be put about. In this singular barque the boatmen will venture out in the most tempestuous weather, without fear of any mishap; and accidents but seldom occur. The canoe sails with great velocity when the wind is favourable; when the reverse is the case, the masts and sail

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are struck, and the men betake them to their long paddles.

The fort has only one gate, which is near the landing-place; and in front of this gate are piled large stores of coal for the use of the numerous steamers touching here monthly. The importation of black diamonds into Galle is pretty extensive. On landing, I proceeded to a place of lodging rejoicing in the title of Royal Hotel, where I took up my quarters in an up-stair room, pleasantly exposed to the full influence of the sea-breeze.

Strangers, on their arrival here, are immediately beset by a host of native peddling gentry, who bring all manner of nicknacks for sale, such as boxes, writing-desks, walking-sticks, and other articles of ebony and calamander wood; ornaments of elephants' teeth and tortoise-shell; suspicious jewellery and precious stones, chiefly manufactured in Birmingham, of pinchbeck and glass, but warranted genuine Cingalese; and the like. The prices demanded in the first instance for these valuables are somewhat preposterous; and it is to be regretted that the sellers but too often succeed in obtaining ten times the proper value of their wares from innocent greenhorns. As a specimen of their mode of dealing, I may adduce the following instance:—When I touched at Galle, on my way from Egypt to India, some years ago, one of these itinerant merchants pestered me, with a hope of inducing me to purchase

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a huge ring, apparently of massive gold, set with what seemed to be a magnificent cat's-eye stone, nearly as large as a gooseberry, for which he demanded the very moderate sum of twenty-five pounds sterling. Wishing to get rid of the fellow's importunities, I told him I would give him one rupee for it; whereupon he turned on his heel and walked off, seemingly in high indignation. About half an hour afterwards, when we passengers were preparing to return on board, my troublesome friend beset me again, and taking me aside, reproduced the costly ring, with: "Master, please give two rupees, and take it!" Here was an ignoble fall, from twenty-five pounds to four shillings! The ornament in question was, of course, made of copper and glass, and fabricated in England or France. These curiosity venders are very improperly permitted to infest the interior of the lodging-houses, where they are absolute nuisances; for, independent of their annoying importunity, they are mostly of the true Autolycus breed, "snappers up of unconsidered trifles;" and it is not advisable to leave any portable articles of value lying anywhere within their reach.

The interior of the fort contains five streets and several lanes. The houses are mostly alike, and have a veranda in front; the doors and windows being thrown open to the weather. The outhouses and kitchens are situated away at the back, detached from the principal building. The

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roofs are generally tiled, and the front part of the roof, which overshades the veranda, is supported by stout posts. The most conspicuous buildings in the fort, are the Queen's House, as it is called, and the old Dutch church, both of which stand upon the highest ground within the walls. In the first of these the Governor resides, when he honours Galle with his presence; and the bishop, chief justice, and other important personages are also occasional lodgers here. One of the large rooms in the Queen's House is used as a public library and reading-room, for the benefit of both residents and strangers. The church is a large old-fashioned edifice, said to have been founded by a former Dutch commandant, whose escutcheon, with his sword and spurs attached to it, forms the principal ornament of its interior. On the Sabbath, this place of worship is fully occupied. The service of the Scottish kirk is first performed there; and as soon as this is over, the English episcopalian service commences; which is succeeded by worship in the Dutch form and language. There is a small Wesleyan chapel, also within the fort; in which service is conducted in English, Cingalese, and Portuguese. The Roman-catholic chapel stands on a small green hill, at a little distance. Its interior is scarcely worth inspecting, but from its station one has a fine view of the town and harbour.

Upon a rocky promontory on the south wall of the fort, formerly occupied by the flagstaff,

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now stands the lighthouse, made entirely of iron, and erected in 1847. It is about seventy-five feet in height, and was made in London. The expense of its manufacture and erection amounted to upwards of 3000*l*. There are only two or three shops for European articles in Galle, and it is sometimes difficult to procure what one requires. Supplies were formerly cheap at this place; but this is no longer the case, although trade has increased greatly since Galle became a coal-depôt for the steamers. Butchers' meat is very expensive, and of inferior quality. Mutton is rarely procurable, and beef seldom good; fowls tolerably good, and the price moderate; fish plenty and good; fruit abundant and cheap, but vegetables rather scarce. The water of Galle is far from agreeable, and no process of filtration, or other means, will serve to remove an unpleasant brackish taste, which all the water I have tasted in this place possesses in a greater or less degree.

There are no less than six schools in Galle, for the behoof of the rising generation; five of which are supported by Government. In these a knowledge of the Scriptures is taught, as well as the ordinary branches of education. The students pay a small fee, seldom exceeding sixpence a month. I was lately present at an examination of one of these seminaries, and I thought that the scholars appeared to be fully as well instructed, and as far advanced, as any of a

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similar age I had seen in India. Schools have been considered by some the primary means for disseminating Christianity, because a man must be civilised before he can be Christianised; while others contend that evangelisation must precede civilisation. For my own part, I believe that they generally go hand in hand. Mere secular knowledge is of little avail, unless combined with the blessings of a scriptural education; and the truths of the Bible will be far better understood and appreciated, when aided by some enlightenment in human sciences. The infidel spirit of the age, still, unfortunately, too prevalent though not so common as formerly, is decidedly opposed to all true education, namely, that which is grounded on the Word of God; falsely maintaining that men are to be fully enlightened, and their condition and society improved, by human means and human learning alone. A very little experience among the heathen people of the East will suffice to convince any one of the fallacy of this notion; excepting those whom worldly pride has rendered wilfully blind to all conviction.

The police of Galle wear a uniform very similar to that of the constabulary force of London. In this body there are four Englishmen in this town, and nine, I am informed, in Colombo; the rest are all natives.

A detachment of H. M's. 37th Regiment is stationed in the garrison here, as well as a company of the Ceylon Rifles. This latter corps

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consists of Malays and Kaffres, descendants of those formerly introduced by the Dutch, from Malacca and the Cape of Good Hope; the native Cingalese being unfit for the military profession. The officers are, of course, Europeans.

The climate of Galle is particularly good; indeed, I doubt whether any other place not more than six degrees from the equator enjoys an equally salubrious climate. The continual sea-breeze renders its hottest weather far more endurable than the ordinary temperature of Southern India. I was much struck with the healthy looks and ruddy faces of the British soldiers—so different from the blanched and wasted appearance of our troops stationed at Madras. The Europeans resident here go about at all hours of the day with perfect impunity. The sea air renders the climate very damp, but this is productive of no ill effect.

The population of Galle consists of about 3000 souls. Besides the soldiers in the garrison, there are not more than fifty or sixty British inhabitants; and the remainder consists of Cingalese, Mahomedans, Malays, and half-castes, here called Burghers. The term "Burgher" is properly applicable only to white persons of pure Dutch descent, of whom there are now but very few in Ceylon; but the name has, by courtesy, been given to all those who in India are styled Indo-Britons, Eurasians, Anglo-Indians, or more commonly "half-castes," namely, the descendants of

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white men by native women. Of late years this class, both here and in India, has been complaining bitterly of the neglect with which Government has treated them, and of their non-admittance into situations and appointments held by the more favoured British; but after all the clamour about this grievance, they seem to overlook the real cause of it, namely, that they are quite unfit for such honours, being neither intelligent, industrious, nor even trustworthy. These Eurasians or half-castes (or whatever they choose to be styled) are the most helpless animals on the face of the earth; their state, moral as well as physical, is feeble and imbecile; they appear to be incapable of bettering themselves, or of taking advantage of any means of improvement afforded them; they are incorrigibly indolent and listless; and if it be argued that violent crimes and other conspicuous blemishes are rare among them, I fear this must be attributed to their want of spirit and energy, rather than to any moral virtue. The fact is, they have not pluck or resolution to be either very wicked or moderately virtuous. I am not prepared to give any opinion as to how far Montesquieu was right or wrong in his doctrine regarding the moral and political influence of climate; but there can be little doubt, I should think, that the character of men and nations must always be powerfully influenced by the temperature in which they dwell; though Montesquieu has perhaps carried his notions on this

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subject a little too far. The unvarying heat of the tropics has doubtless greatly tended to enervate and degrade the descendants of Englishmen in our Eastern empire. There are several honourable exceptions to the above rule, both in India and Ceylon, though they are not as numerous as could be desired. Eurasians are to be found who would do honour to any society or country; but such are very few and far between. As far as I can learn, the condition of this class of people, in this island, is in every respect much the same as in India. That this class might be greatly improved, no one I presume will attempt to deny; but this improvement must begin at home; by their own exertions, and in their own families; for without this, all the government schools in the world can do little or no good. They must teach their children the difference between truth and falsehood; they must shake off the clog of vicious indolence that now hampers them, and take courage to exert themselves; they must acquire a spirit of independence, so as to prefer a crust earned by their own labour to a begged, borrowed, or stolen loaf; and then they will soon have no reason to complain of discouragements thrown in their way, or want of support from a Government which has always shown the greatest readiness to help all who are willing to help themselves in an honest way.

The Cingalese are a small race, and by no means good looking. Their complexion is the

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same as that of the Hindoos; but their features are in general very disagreeable. Some of the children have pretty faces, as they do not seem to acquire that unprepossessing expression till grown up. I am told that some of the women (particularly those of rank and family) are handsome, but all I have seen have been particularly the reverse. The costume of the men is very unbecoming. They all wear a long petticoat, fastened round the waist, and reaching to the heels. The upper part of the body has commonly no covering except a kind of scarf thrown loosely over the shoulders; but some wear a white jacket, open in front, and made in the European fashion; and which, in the absence of all clothing upon the chest, has a very bad appearance. They wear their hair, which is long and luxuriant, dressed like a woman's, with one or two very large tortoise-shell combs fastened in it, which imparts a peculiarly unmanly look to the wearer. The dress of the women differs little from that of the men; but they mostly wear a kind of spencer or boddice, with long sleeves — a very ill-contrived garment — for instead of fastening tight in front, below the bosom, like the *chôlee* (boddice) of an Indian female, so as to support the breasts, it is quite loose and does not at all confine the bosom, which in a warm climate soon becomes flaccid and pendulous without some support. Both men and women, when out of doors, commonly carry long-handled Chinese

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umbrellas, which are everywhere to be purchased in the bazaars. They are made of thick paper lacquered and varnished, and will keep off sun and rain better than our umbrellas do, but of course they are not very durable, being easily damaged. They cost ninepence or a shilling each.

The Cingalese entertain but few of the scruples of caste, which so completely enthral the Hindoo. They do not object to anyone's entering their houses, or touching their cooking vessels. They do not paint their foreheads with any distinguishing mark, nor go through the tedious ceremonies of purification, &c., which a Hindoo must observe. There is one disgusting Indian habit, to which they are addicted universally, namely, chewing betel, which they masticate all day long. Coffee drinking, unknown to the natives of India, is here universal; and almost every Cingalese hut has a few coffee shrubs growing in front of it. Many smoke cheroots and chew tobacco, but the hookah is here unknown. I have not seen any one take snuff, and I believe tobacco in this form is rarely, if ever, used.

There is one agreeable item in the aspect of a Cingalese, namely, his happy, cheerful, and contented look, which is very pleasing after the morose, dogged air which the countenance of a native of India generally wears. They are thoughtless creatures, easily pleased, and without a care for the future, being perhaps the most frivolous minded race in the world. I feel my

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utter ignorance of their language to be a sad drawback. An inability to speak with the people among whom we travel, certainly takes away much from the pleasure of the excursion.

Servants are tolerably good here. Not being hampered with prejudices, they will do more work than Indian domestics, and have no objections to turn their hands to anything. In saying this much, I do not mean to assert that the Cingalese are an industrious or hard working race. On the contrary, there are no individuals on earth who have a greater horror of anything like labour; and they can be got to work only when driven to it by absolute necessity. All the hard working men on the coffee estates and plantations in the island are coolies from India.

The life led by Europeans in this island differs widely from the mode pursued in India. The superior climate of Ceylon renders superfluous many articles of luxury, which in the other country are considered absolutely necessary. The houses here are small, and the rooms confined and close, in comparison with our large and airy Indian mansions. The servants required are few in number; palanquins are rarely to be seen, and punkahs are not by any means universally employed. Englishmen go to bed at a much later hour here, and do not usually get up for early morning exercise; but the climate admits of much more exercise being taken during the day, and one is not obliged to shut himself in doors

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from eight o'clock till sunset, as he must do, during the greater part of the year, in the hotter regions of India.

There has been lately a theatrical performance going on at Galle, but on account of my ignorance of the language, I have not considered it worth my while to witness it. Dramatic representations are not at all uncommon among the Cingalese. They can hardly be said to exist in India, although in former ages they must have been carried to great perfection in that country, as the numerous plays in the Sanskrit tongue (and some of them very excellent ones) fully testify. The subject of the Cingalese drama is, I am informed, usually a bloody tragedy of the Titus Andronicus order, involving various exploits of ancient kings and heroes.

European goods are somewhat dearer here than in India, and labour of all kind much more expensive. English as well as Indian coins are current, and the rupee is held equivalent to two shillings. The Dutch rix-dollar is reckoned at 1*s*. 6*d*., but this is a nominal coin. The only Dutch money I have seen, is the *challie*, a small copper coin, worth half a farthing, and the *stiver*, valued at three challies, rather smaller than a halfpenny, and having the figure of an elephant impressed on one side.

There are several very pleasant and picturesque routes in the vicinity of Galle, where a stranger will enjoy a walk or ride, amid a lovely landscape,

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refreshed by an incessant cool breeze from the sea. The surrounding country is very beautiful, vegetation being so exceedingly luxuriant. It is almost entirely covered with tall trees, among which a thick bushy jungle fills up the interstices, while numbers of large convolvulus creepers festoon the whole. That very elegant flower, the Gloriosa superba, is one of the commonest of creeping plants, and may be seen covering the low brushwood with its bright scarlet and orange blossoms, and climbing gradually up the highest trees.

Fruit trees of many kinds grow in great abundance, and bear plenty of produce. There is a species of cocoanut, very common here, which I have never seen in India, though I believe it is to be found on the Malabar coast. It is called the "king cocoanut," and is smaller than the ordinary nut, of a more oblong shape, and its outer husk is of a bright golden hue. The oil of this nut is said to be much superior to that of the ordinary cocoanut. The bread-fruit is a strikingly handsome tree, tall and stately, with spreading branches and huge leaves. That very amusing and instructive navigator, Mr. Herman Melville, has fully described the many ways of cooking the bread-fruit, practised in the South-Sea Islands. Here it would appear that its uses are not so multifarious. When cut in pieces and boiled, it is not a bad substitute for a potato; and sliced thin and toasted, it is tolerably palatable; but on

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the whole, I confess I am disappointed in this vegetable. A recollection of Cook's voyages conjures up preconceived ideas of hot rolls and penny loaves, fresh baked, growing on trees, and only waiting to be buttered and eaten; and the breadfruit, like many other realities in life, falls somewhat short of embodying the fancies of our youth.

On the east side of the harbour, and opposite to the fort, stands a green-wooded hill, named Bona Vista, the beautiful view from the top of which, well repays the trouble of scrambling up; and about a mile distant from Galle, on the road to Waukwellé, are two Boodhist temples, which are also worthy of a visit. These temples stand on the summits of two thickly-wooded hills, at a little distance from each other. Close to the first of these temples is the priest's house, a very comfortable bungalow, into which I walked without ceremony, not knowing to whom the place belonged, but no umbrage was taken at the intrusion. The room I entered was, I observed, hung round with English coloured prints, representing sporting, hunting, and racing scenes, framed and glazed; and I may here remark, that a taste for pictures seems to be very general among the Cingalese, as far as I have had the opportunity of observing. The temple is a small polygon building, and contains a gigantic statue of Boodha, seated crosslegged on a kind of platform; and in front of this statue are several small

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images of the same deity. The walls of this shrine are daubed all over the interior with figures, but what these are intended to represent I could not make out. The temple pertains to the Siamese sect of Boodhists, whose tenets are more correct and pure than those of the Cingalese, whose religion has been somewhat corrupted.

There has always been frequent intercourse kept up between this island and Siam, by means of religious missions; and the kings of Siam have, at times, transmitted valuable presents to the temples in Ceylon. The second temple is situated on another hill, about a quarter of a mile further on. This is a larger edifice than the former, and of oblong shape. It comprises two apartments. In the first, is to be seen an image of the Boodha to come—that is to say, the last incarnation of this divinity, who shall make his appearance in the course of some few thousand years hereafter. The interior walls, like those of the other, are covered with fresco paintings, but of a superior description, and illustrative of numerous legends and adventures of kings, priests, ladies, and nondescript supernatural beings; very instructive and edifying, no doubt, to those who can understand them. Among other designs, I remarked one representing the punishment, in the regions below, of a wicked king, whom two marvellous ill-favoured fiends are pitchforking head downwards, in the midst

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of a liberal allowance of flames. In the inner chamber is an immense statue of Gôtama Boodha, the last incarnation of the deity that has already appeared, in a recumbent posture, of a yellow complexion, and clad in yellow drapery. This idol is upwards of thirty feet in length.

The Boodhist priests are not a distinct caste, like the Brahmins of India. On the contrary, they are devoted to a life of celibacy, so that anything like a distinct tribe could not exist. They are chosen from among various classes, and educated for the priesthood in colleges appointed for the purpose. They live principally on voluntary alms, and abstain from the fair sex altogether. Yellow is the sacred colour of Boodha's followers, and the priests wear a long robe of this hue. They have their heads clean shaven and uncovered, and generally carry a fan of palm-leaf in the hand. They seem to have few of the foolish superstitions of Indian Brahmins, regarding pollution from the touch of a stranger, and similar matters. My happening to enter a priest's house would, in India, have grievously defiled the sacred dwelling, but in the present instance no harm whatever was done. They are, nevertheless, as careful as any Brahmin can be, not to destroy any living animal, such being expressly enjoined by Boodha. These priests do not possess the great influence over the people which Brahmins maintain in India; indeed, although they obtain alms from the common

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people, they exercise but little sway over their minds. The Cingalese are a frivolous, reckless set, and care little about religious matters. Should a priest happen to tire of his profession, and wish to marry, he can at once give up his priesthood and turn layman again. As a sign of his abjuring holy orders, he throws his yellow mantle into a river.*

* Regarding the Boodhist religion I shall take a future opportunity of speaking.

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CHAP. II.

Ceylon continued.—Journey from Galle to Colombo.—Aspect of the Country.—The Cinnamon Plant.—Description of Colombo.—Newspapers.

After a week's residence at Galle, I quitted that place for Colombo by the mail-coach, a vehicle which in England would be considered a strange sort of rattletrap, but which is certainly a great convenience to travellers here. This mail, which is somewhat like a light double phaeton, starts every morning (the Sabbath excepted) at five, and reaches Colombo (distance seventy-two miles north by west) at near three in the afternoon. It is drawn by two horses, which are changed nine times in the course of the journey. The cattle are by no means first rate. Horses are not bred in Ceylon, and the community is supplied with the refuse of the Bombay market, which fetch much higher prices here, than in India. Much time is lost in changing horses, as the servants at the stations have none of the promptitude of an English ostler, and the fresh pair is seldom in readiness. Most of the stations at which

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horses are changed, are places of accommodation for travellers, here called "rest-houses," some of which afford tolerably comfortable quarters. The entire road from Galle to Colombo runs along the coast, and the sea is generally visible. The road is bordered on both sides with abundance of trees, chiefly palms, which shade wayfarers from the rays of the sun, without intercepting the sea-breeze. About a mile from Galle, near the mouth of the Mahamodere lake, I passed numerous water-pits filled with cocoanut husks rotting, so that the fibre, used for making ropes, &c., may be more easily stripped off, which give forth a most obnoxious odour. The Gindura river, about five miles from Galle, is crossed by a bridge of boats; and much of the country hereabouts is strikingly pretty.

At Bentotte, the fifth changing-place, and nearly half way to Colombo, we stopped to breakfast. The rest-house here is a slight building, open at both sides, with verandas, and a small bedroom at either end. The floor is bricked, a very common practice here; and a large thatch roof covers the whole, the eaves extending far on either side. The furniture consists of two small beds in the end rooms, and an old sofa, a table, and some half dozen rickety chairs in the principal apartment. Here we stopped half an hour, and met the Colombo mail on the way to Galle. Just beyond Bentotte, another bridge of boats leads across the mouth of a river joining the sea.

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The next place of importance is Caltura, a large village twenty-five miles from Colombo, which contains several excellent houses, tenanted by Europeans.

A large river, the Kallu-Ganga, the source of which is close to Adam's Peak, is here crossed by a lengthy wooden bridge. Ten miles further on lies the village of Pantura, near the embouchure of an estuary of considerable extent. When approaching Colombo, the road leads through the cinnamon plantations, which are nearly five miles in extent. It is doubtful whether this spice, for which Ceylon has so long been famous, is indigenous to the island, or was introduced by Arab traders in former times. The ancients appear to have held singular notions regarding it. Herodotus, in particular, tells a story worthy of the narrative of that veracious mariner Sindbad the Sailor. He states that certain large birds in Arabia, were wont to build their nests of rolls of cinnamon, which they brought from some distant land unknown; and that the Arab traders used to bring joints of beef and mutton, which they laid near the precipitous rocks inhabited by these birds. This store of butcher's-meat was straightway conveyed by the ravenous fowls up to their nests, which, breaking down with the weight, the precious spice was scattered on the plains below, and eagerly gathered by the expectant Arabs!

The cinnamon bush is a species of laurel; it bears a white flower, which is succeeded by a

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small oblong berry, scarce as large as a pea. The spice is the inner bark of the shrub; the branches of which are cut and peeled twice in the course of the year, about Christmas and Midsummer. Considerable dexterity is displayed in the process of decortication, which is performed by persons brought up to the business, and who execute it with extraordinary rapidity, with the aid of a knife of peculiar shape. The fragrant odour of a cinnamon plantation, said to perfume the gales for miles out at sea, is entirely fabulous; for neither does the shrub nor its flower possess any perceptible smell. The scent belongs to the inner bark, and during the process of peeling, the fragrance is very strong. These plantations cover more than 4000 acres, and resemble a thick-tangled copse. The shrubs do not seem to be planted in any regular order, and they require but little care. That curious creeper, the pitcher-plant, spreads over a great part of the ground, below the bushes. Cinnamon is planted only in the southern and western parts of this island, and the shrub will not grow elsewhere; but for this fact, no satisfactory reason, that I am aware of, has been assigned.

The cultivation of this spice was formerly a Government monopoly. The Dutch Government was extremely strict in the protection of this illiberal system; so much so, that any person selling a particle of cinnamon, or even peeling or injuring a single shrub, was liable to be punished

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with death! The Government monopoly was entirely abolished some years ago, and the spice is now cultivated and exported by private individuals. The export of cinnamon in 1848 amounted to 492,000 lbs., valued at about 50,000*l.* sterling.

Passing the cinnamon grounds, the road led through Colpetty, which may be considered the fashionable suburb of Colombo. On either side of the way, lay neat villas and gardens, the property of many of the merchants and other residents here. The fort and native town of Colombo are about a mile further on; the road leading over "Galle face," as it is named, an extensive open space on the sea-shore, which is the usual evening resort of the gentry, who drive or ride here, and inhale the refreshing sea-breeze.

The fort of Colombo, in which the greater proportion of the European inhabitants reside, is situated on a peninsula, having the sea immediately in front, and in the rear a large fresh-water lake. The most conspicuous object is the pavilion with the lighthouse on its top, a neat and picturesque edifice, standing on a promontory facing the sea. The fort is defended by strong walls, with numerous bastions; and contains several wide and handsome streets, with all the public offices. The principal streets are planted with rows of shady trees, and most of the houses have large verandas in front. Government House stands in the centre of the chief thoroughfare,

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and within a minute's walk of it, are the Post-office, the Library and Reading-rooms, the Court-house, and the Royal Hotel.

A bronze statue of Sir Edward Barnes ornaments the place where two of the principal streets unite. The numerous shops are mostly kept by our countrymen, and many of them are on the general store principle, dealing in all manner of miscellaneous wares.

The *pettah* or town inhabited by the natives, is at some little distance outside of the fort, to the eastward. It is a collection of straggling bazars, somewhat crowded, and not over clean.

Besides the Royal Hotel, there is another place of accommodation for travellers, denominated the Railway Hotel—a startling name certainly—standing at the terminus of a contemplated rail-road, which is to be constructed—goodness only knows when!—between Colombo and Kandy. Both houses are tolerably good, but the Royal is decidedly the better of the two; and both possess the nuisance of a billiard table.

The houses in Colombo are built chiefly of *kabook*, a kind of red gravelly clay (I believe it to be decomposed ironstone) which is dug up, in a soft state, with the spade; and when exposed for some time to the sun and air, becomes as hard as stone. It is excellent material for the purpose. The lower apartments are commonly floored with bricks, an ugly fashion, but one which the Dutch seem to have followed wherever they have settled.

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The climate of Colombo is like that of Galle, very damp, but generally healthy.

The harbour, which lies to the north of the fort, is none of the most commodious; and the approach being dangerous on account of sunken rocks, large vessels are obliged to anchor in the roads at a considerable distance.

The fresh-water lake, extending behind the fort, I have heard, is artificial. In the middle of it, is an island going by the name of Slave Island, as the Dutch were formerly wont to confine their slaves there. It has now houses and barracks erected upon it.

Colombo is said to be an ancient town; but of its early history, while inhabited only by Cingalese, not much is known. When the Portuguese gained a footing in the island, they erected a fort here, which was wrested from them by the Dutch in 1656; and the town was taken from the Dutch by the English in 1796.

The population of Colombo is said to comprise about 36,000 inhabitants; but I know not how far this account may be correct, as I have not seen any authenticated statement.

A good account of Ceylon, or gazetteer of the island, was not to be procured in any of the shops. A book has lately appeared by one Mr. Sirr, who was, I believe, a barrister here, which has given great offence, being written in a fashion more Trollopian than complimentary. Another work has been put forth, compiled by a Mr. Prid-

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ham, who never was in Ceylon; and, as might be expected, his work is full of erroneous statements. The excellent narrative of Robert Knox—now considerably more than a century and a half old, but by far the best account of Ceylon ever written—is very rare; and, though to be found in the public libraries of Galle and Colombo, is not to be purchased anywhere.

Cricket seems to be the favourite game of the English soldiers quartered here; and the juvenile Cingalese appear to have imbibed a taste for the sport. I saw a party of little copper-coloured urchins engaged in a game of cricket with all the glee and eagerness of English schoolboys.

Of the society of Colombo I am unable to speak, having seen so very little of it, for I was but three days in the town. Mr. Sirr, in his work before mentioned, gives a bad account of it, but I believe his assertions are not to be relied on; as, for certain reasons, he was not received in good society, and consequently the grapes are sour. My own first impressions, as far as they go, are decidedly favourable; and I assuredly have no wish to disturb these ideas of the kindness which I experienced during my very brief sojourn. As in other parts of the East, white complexions are drawn together by mutual friendly feelings, though, from all I hear, there is no doubt that among the European community of Ceylon at large, there exist, at times, much

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faction and party spirit, and occasionally a good deal of rancour, in the Little Pedlington style.

Hospitality is very general among the planters scattered over the island. In their jungle abodes, a new face is quite a treat; and a stranger is pretty sure of a welcome, though he may be obliged to rough it sometimes on rather scanty accommodations. Among those living in and near the towns, this virtue is far more sparingly exercised; indeed, where hotels and rest-houses are to be found, there is less call for it. Salaries in Ceylon are smaller than in India: the style of living more economical; and the expenses of hospitality can be less afforded. Indian hospitality is moreover said to be now extinct; and albeit this is by no means the case, there is certainly far less of it exercised now-a-days than was the fashion in former years. Money is not as plentiful in India as it used to be; and many people now try to avoid debt, and save what they can, in order to return comfortably home. On this account the profuse hospitality for which old nabobs were famous, has greatly diminished: and besides this, there are now hotels, lodgings, clubs, &c., none of which existed formerly.

Besides the English and other Europeans who come to Ceylon to reside for a certain number of years, with the expectation of returning to their native country, there are numerous settlers, mostly of Dutch extraction, white as well as of

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mixed blood, who have lived on the island for some generations.*

The newspapers of Ceylon are the worst I have ever seen. Of these there are three, all printed at Colombo, with bad type, bad paper, and worse contents. Personalities and vulgar abuse are indulged in to an extent I never witnessed in the gazettes of the Western States of America, and people are called by their names in full print. The editor of one of these delectable sheets, was well horsewhipped lately, and, to judge by the vituperative style of his paper, and the blackguardisms put forth unblushingly in it, I should say that this wholesome correction might occasionally be repeated with advantage.

Colombo contains no "lions," or objects of interest to travellers; so after a visit to the cinnamon plantations, and a drive round the neighbourhood of the town, I resolved on proceeding to Kandy, and thence to the sanatorium of Nuera Ellia.

* There are now, I am told, very few genuine Dutch families extant. Nearly all of the burghers have a "lick of the tar-brush," that is to say, a certain amount of dark blood in their veins.

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CHAP. III.

Journey from Colombo to Kandy.—Appearance of the Country.—Arrival at Kandy.—The great Boodhist Temple.—Gôtama's Tooth.

I ACCORDINGLY left Colombo by the mail-coach at five o'clock, A.M., the distance to Kandy being seventy-two miles, with nine changes of horses. Proceeding in a north-easterly direction, the scenery gradually assumes a different appearance from that of the coast, and the vegetation also changes in some degree. Cocoanut trees are scarcer, but the areca, bread-fruit, and teak abound. I saw on the road-side numbers of coffee-shrubs growing apparently wild, but I was told that they were all planted by the natives. Half way, the coach stopped at Ambapusse, thirty-six miles and a half from Colombo; here we met with the mail coming from Kandy, and the passengers by both coaches breakfasted together.

Ambapusse is a beautiful spot, surrounded with hills wooded to the top. The rest-house is commodious and well built, containing beds for six travellers, and other apartments besides. This station is said to be unwholesome at some

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seasons of the year. Continuing the journey, the road gradually ascends, and in some places is rather steep. At the foot of the Kadduganâva Pass, a pair of extra horses was attached to our vehicle. The Pass, which is fully three miles in length, leads up the side of a mountain, and has been constructed with great skill, being nowhere dangerous or difficult of ascent. The view in all directions is magnificent. The sides of the hills are nearly covered with trees and shrubs, among which the tall majestic ebony is the most remarkable.

Numerous streams pour from the summits into the valley below; and in the middle of the pass, the road leads through a mass of rock, hollowed through and forming an arch overhead. Upon the highest part, which is about 2000 feet above the level of the sea, stands a tall monument, erected to the memory of Captain Dawson, of the Royal Engineers, who died at Colombo, after having planned and constructed this excellent road. While descending on the east side of the Pass, we changed horses for the last time at Eluquatté, about nine miles from Kandy. Six miles further on, the road crosses the famous bridge of Peradenia, over the Mahâvelli Gunga, the largest river in Ceylon. This remarkable bridge consists of a single arch, extending 208 feet. It is constructed of satin wood, with abutments of brick and stone, and metalled over the road-way. The construction is so ingenious, that

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any part of the bridge can be removed for repairs, &c., without displacing any of the remainder. The valley of the river is fertile and beautiful: numerous villas and fine gardens line its sides. At Peradenia there are some sugar plantations; but this cane does not thrive well here, and the sugar estates have generally proved failures.

The roads in this island, that is to say, the trunk or main roads, are better than in India. Most of them were made during the government of Sir E. Barnes. The branch roads are, however, for the most part, mere rude paths through the jungle. Heavy goods are chiefly conveyed, as in India, in the rude but serviceable vehicles, called "bandies" at Madras, drawn by bullocks. By a late enactment, which has proved a highly unpopular rule, every male inhabitant of Ceylon, of every rank and description, is obliged to labour six days in the year, upon the public roads, or to pay an annual tax of about three shillings, which amounts to the hire for six days of a Cingalese labourer. This tax is so far unequal, that it is the same for both rich and poor; but considering the infinite benefit that good roads confer on a country like this, I cannot see that the good people have so much cause for grumbling.

Cingalese villages resemble Indian, but the houses are more substantially built, larger and better. The little open shops in the bazars are also better supplied than in India; for, besides the usual stores of grain, fruit, coarse sweetmeats,

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pots and pans, and rude domestic utensils, they contain supplies of various European goods, which the Hindoo would never dream of purchasing or using, but which are in general employ here. Many of the Cingalese make use of chairs and tables, and nearly all use coarse English crockery ware, which is exposed for sale in every village. That curse to the community, the grog-shop, with its little stand of bottles and cups, is unfortunately as often to be seen here as in India. Owing to this temptation, encouraged by Government on account of the revenue acquired from spirituous liquors, drunkenness has increased tenfold, among the population of both countries, within the last quarter of a century. Manufactures are not greatly encouraged among the natives of this agricultural country; and the articles fabricated in the villages, are mostly made on the rude old plan that has been pursued from time immemorial. With the people of the East, in general, manufactures seem to be rather the operation of instinct than of art; and, despising all improvements and new inventions, they form their fabrics in the simple manner practised two or three thousand years ago, just as a bird constructs its nest, or a bee its comb.

Many of the villages I have passed through lie imbedded in thick woods. This bears evidence to the salubrity of the climate of Ceylon. In India, such places would be perfect hotbeds of jungle-fever. Many parts of the island are, how-

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ever, very unhealthy, particularly where there is much marshy, uncultivated jungle. The prevailing maladies are fever and ague, and dysentery.

The appearance of Kandy greatly disappoints the stranger. One would expect the old capital of the island, and residence of her kings*, to be something better than a collection of dirty bazars (for it is nothing else), with scarce a trace left of its former importance. The situation is, however, picturesque and romantic. The town stands beside a fine sheet of water, and is surrounded by wooded hills, with rich valleys lying at their skirts.

Here I got into a lodging-house kept by a Mr. Stainton, an Englishman, which I found tolerably comfortable quarters.

In the next place, I proposed visiting the great temple of Kandy, in which is kept the famous *dalada*, or tooth of Boodha, the palladium of Ceylon; and I was advised to go there between the hours of five and six in the morning, when worship is performed, and the interior of the temple thrown open, as at that time the priests would have no objections to admit me into the inner room where the celebrated relic is preserved. Accordingly I

* The oldest capital of Ceylon was Anurâjhapoora, situated in the northern part of the island. It was deserted after the Malabar invaders drove out the Cingalese, about eight centuries ago. There is now, I am told, a small town on the spot, and numerous remains of the ancient city are to be seen. The station is very unhealthy, and consequently seldom visited.

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went next morning, taking with me a Cingalese, who spoke a little English, as guide. The temple, which stands near the back of the lake, is a very mean-looking edifice, and would be considered a shabby affair in any Hindoo village.

This shrine, and a remnant of the old palace now forming part of the police-court, are, however, the only relics extant of Kandy when a capital city and a royal residence. The temple consists of two stories, constructed partly of wood, and surrounded by a moat. At the entrance, there are to be seen two elephants and a few deities carved in relief upon stone, but there is little, if any, sculpture elsewhere. The exterior wall of the lower story is daubed with rude paintings representing the torments of the condemned hereafter, in every frightful variety, for the edification and improvement, I presume, of the populace at large, on the "*in terrorem*" principle, as Burns hath it:—

> "The fear o' hell's a hangman's whup
> To haud the wretch in order."

The upper story is also embellished with queer fresco paintings of nondescript personages, supposed to be gods. Religious ceremonies had commenced when I arrived, and the fane resounded with music of a most noisy and discordant nature. The Cingalese appear to entertain the same notions of harmony as the Hindoos, and one would suppose both to be gifted, in this re-

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spect, with the "reasonable good ear" of sweet Bully Bottom.* When I entered the temple, the priests and people made way for me, without hesitation or scruple. In this particular, the paganism of Ceylon differs greatly from that of India. In the latter country, the sanctuary would be utterly polluted by the presence of a European. In front of the vestibule, near the entrance, were four huge elephants' tusks, planted upright, and two tall candelabras of brass containing numerous flaming lamps. Here stood the votaries of Boodha, making such a hideous and stunning din, that I felt desirous of remaining in their company as short a time as possible.

One of the yellow-clad priests conducted me up a flight of steps to the *sanctum sanctorum* in the upper story. This is a small room, ornamented with all manner of tawdry finery, and lighted up with numerous lamps; for there is no window, or crevice, to admit a single glimmer of daylight. At the further end, upon a kind of table or platform, stands the shrine in which the sacred tooth is deposited, protected by a bronze grating. The shrine looks like a gilded beehive. It is made of silver-gilt, constructed in the form of a bell, about four feet high, and hung round with numerous gold chains and ornaments. This

* *Titania.* What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?
Bottom. I have a reasonable good ear in music: let us have the tongs and the bones.—*Midsummer Night's Dream.*

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outer casket, I was informed, comprises seven smaller, of similar shape, and enclosed one within another; and the innermost, which is of pure gold, contains the holy relic itself. Just in front of the grating, at the top, is the semblance of a large full-blown flower, wrought in gold, in the centre of which is a huge (so-called) diamond, which, if real, must be exceedingly valuable.*

The *dalada*, believed to be one of the teeth of Gôtama Boodha, was brought to Ceylon, about 1500 years ago, from the continent of India, where it had been worshipped in the old times when the Boodhist faith there prevailed. The Kandyan princes always regarded it as a palladium on the possession of which depended dominion in Ceylon, and it was carefully preserved from falling into the hands of any foe until it was captured by the British in 1817.† This celebrated relic has been reported to be the tooth of a monkey; but I believe it is not really the tooth of man or beast, but a bit of ivory, about two inches long, wrought in the form of a canine tusk. The last occasion on which it was taken out of its enclosures was in 1828, when Sir Edward Barnes, the governor, caused it to be publicly displayed.

My guide, who was present on the occasion, informed me that the governor first went and

* I have since heard that it is merely a water sapphire.

† The Portuguese have asserted that they took the holy tooth in the course of their campaigns in the sixteenth century, but this the Cingalese emphatically deny.

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purified himself by bathing and going through all the various mummeries of priestly ablution; and he was then attired in the yellow robes of priesthood, and, entering the temple, proceeded with much ceremony to unlock the shrine and its interior caskets. When he had taken the holy tooth in his hand, he trembled so violently that he nearly fell to the ground! The latter part of this veracious statement is of course a fable, and for the sake of Sir Edward Barnes, I will believe the whole of it to be equally false. The dalada was preserved in the custody of the British authorities till about three years ago, when it was made over to the Boodhist priests of Kandy. Not long ago, a mission from Siam offered the enormous sum of 50,000*l.* for this worthless bit of ivory, but the Kandyan priests refused to dispose of it.

In a side room adjoining the sanctuary, I was shown a number of gilded deities, of all sizes, and two ugly portraits daubed on the wall, said to be the likenesses of celebrated Kandyan monarchs.

Leaving the great temple, I went to inspect two smaller fanes in the vicinity. One of these, my guide told me, was a *vihâré*, or Boodhist temple, and the other a *dewâlé*, or place of Hindoo worship, in the corrupt form in which Hindooism exists in Ceylon. Neither temples were in any way remarkable, or worthy of particular mention. In the enclosure of the former, I saw what is

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called an impression of Boodha's foot, carved on a stone, and about four or five feet long; and here also the stump of a large *peepal* tree was pointed out to me by my guide, who told me that the tree had been blown over by a hurricane some years ago, and when it began to decay, it was hewn away from near the root, whereupon it shed torrents of blood, to the infinite surprise and consternation of all beholders!

The *peepal* (ficus religiosa) is the sacred fig tree of India, under which the god Vishnu was born. It is really one of the fig tribe, though it bears no resemblance to the fruit tree of our gardens. It grows to a great size, lives to an immense age, and is one of the finest and most elegant trees in the world. The branches are thick and spreading; the leaves, which are shaped like a heart, are about seven inches in length; and the fruit, though akin to a fig, is not larger than a cherry, and of a pink colour when ripe. This fruit has no stalk, and consequently does not depend, but adheres to the bark of the smaller branches. The *peepal* is quite as highly revered in this island as on the continent of Hindostan. Many of our former writers on India and Ceylon have confounded this tree with the *banian* (ficus indica), or, I should rather say, have devised an imaginary tree, compounded of the two; investing it with the heart-shaped leaves of the former, and the dropping and multiplying stems of the latter.

The *banian* is also held sacred in a certain de-

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gree, but it does not possess the peculiar sanctity of the species above described. It is celebrated on account of its remarkable property of multiplying itself by means of the fibres, which drop from its branches, and which leave the tree scarcely thicker than packthreads, but, after reaching the ground and taking root, will become in time as large and massy as the original trunk. These stems are thrown out in every direction, so as to form a complete grove round the parent tree. The leaf of the banian resembles that of the poplar, and is four or five inches long. Milton commits a woful error when, in describing the first garments of our first parents, he likens these leaves unto an "Amazonian targe," for they are much smaller than the foliage of the common garden fig. The fig which this tree bears is like that of the peepal, and of a bright scarlet hue when ripe. Both kinds afford sustenance to birds and animals, but are not eaten by man. The age of the banian is incalculable; for it is a tree of very slow growth, and, continually multiplying, it may be said to live for ever. The famous Kubeer banian, on the banks of the Nerbudda, in Guzerat, is said to be extensive enough to shelter an army of 7000 men. I have never seen any specimen of this tree at all approaching that enormous size.

From hence my guide conducted me up a rising ground covered with wood, for about half a mile, to an eminence where stood a small

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Boodhist temple, with a *dagoba* or bell-shaped solid building close beside it. The temple contained a figure of Boodha standing erect on a platform, about twenty feet high, and clad in a long red mantle. The *dagoba*, which I do not think I have mentioned before, is the usual appendage to places consecrated to Boodha. It is a solid construction of stone or brick, in the shape of a bell or bee-hive, sometimes of large size, and generally having a small pointed spire on the top. These singular erections are supposed to contain some relic or emblem of Boodha, perchance a hair of his head, a paring of his nail, or print of his foot; and they are by no means peculiar to Ceylon, but are to be found in all countries in which the Boodhist religion prevails or has ever prevailed.

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CHAP. IV.

Kandy continued.—The Boodhist Religion.—The Veddahs, a wild Race of People inhabiting the Forests.—Objects of Interest in Kandy and its Environs.—Lamentable Disaster that befell Major Davie and his Troops in 1803.

Of the origin of the Boodhist religion, little or nothing is known for certain. According to Hindoo mythology, Boodha was the ninth and last avatar of Vishnu; but this the genuine Boodhists peremptorily deny, as they disclaim all connexion or acquaintance with the Indian deity. According to their doctrines, since the commencement of time, Boodha, the supreme divinity, has appeared on earth in human form no less than twenty-four times, for the purpose of teaching mankind and purging the world of sin; and he will once more appear at some indefinite period. The last Boodha who came to regenerate corrupted mankind, and whose religion now prevails in Burmah, Siam, and Thibet, as well as in Ceylon, was Gôtama, originally a pious and amiable prince who lived nearly six centuries previous to the time of our Saviour, and who, through his extraordinary vir-

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tues and piety, became merged in the deity, casting off his human nature. The creed which he taught shall last 5000 years, nearly one-half of which period has now elapsed. There can be little doubt that this Boodhist faith, is merely a corruption of the original and true religion, first proclaimed in Eden, and that the incarnate Boodha is but a human perversion of the promised Messiah. The Hindoo version of the story runs as follows:—They say that at a certain time, the giant enemies of the gods became wonderfully religious, and practised the precepts of the Vedas with a degree of zeal worthy of the most conscientious devotees. At this, the gods became terribly alarmed, lest their foes should grow too good (!), and thereby, like Southey's Kehama, become too powerful for them. In order therefore to check this dangerous prevalence of devotion and piety, Vishnu undertook to re-appear on earth, in the form of Boodha, a holy sage; and in this character he busied himself in misleading a large portion of mankind, by teaching them a false and pernicious system of religion—an employment truly worthy of a god!—and thereby depriving them of the sanctity and power they had acquired in ardently following the true faith. The disciples of this mischievous Boodha became, in process of time, very numerous, till they eventually waged war with the upholders of the old Brahminical religion. The result of this religious war, was that the Brahmin party prevailed, and

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the Boodhists were expelled from India, whence they settled in the neighbouring countries. Preposterous as this Hindoo fable is, I think it may probably be founded on truth. Boodha was perhaps really a clever and intelligent native of India, who, disgusted with the abominations and absurdities of Brahminism, endeavoured to reform the creed of his country, by preaching pure deism, and exerting himself to subvert the overwhelming influence of the priestly caste. Many, however, have held the opinion that Boodhism is a far more ancient system than Brahminism, and that it once prevailed over the whole of India—but on this subject, I must be excused from enlarging, as it is one which has not been, and probably never will be, satisfactorily ascertained. The Boodhists believe that the deity has imposed five commands on mankind, which all are bound to obey. These forbid, the destruction of animal life, theft, falsehood, adultery, and drinking intoxicating liquors. I scarcely need say that these precepts are never observed, at least by the Cingalese. In other respects they appear to be materialists, and hold that all things exist from natural causes; good or evil actions bringing their own reward or punishment. They believe in the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, and that, after this probationary state of existence, the soul may be sent to animate the body of a flea, or any other creature.

The Boodhism of Ceylon has been much cor-

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rupted, as well as the Hindoo system of religion, which also prevails in the island. Some of the later kings of Kandy, who were of Indian origin, endeavoured to amalgamate the two creeds, the upshot of which has been, that both have become so changed and mixed together, that it is difficult to tell the difference between them; and a number of strange superstitions, foreign to both, have been engrafted upon them in a manner not easily accounted for, but probably arising from various legends current among the people.

In the Hindoo temples the worship is generally conducted by laymen, instead of Brahmins; and as well as the Cingalese, the people adore the devil, whose favour they endeavour to propitiate by all manner of absurd ceremonies. Like the Athenians in St. Paul's time, they also pay their devotions to an "unknown God." Regarding the twenty-six heavens and thirty-four hells which await the followers of Boodha hereafter, and other similar absurdities, nothing in particular need be said. Of Boodhist priesthood I have already spoken. The Cingalese are said to have been divided into four castes, like the Hindoos. This arrangement was probably introduced by the Indian conquerors of Ceylon, five centuries before the time of our Saviour*; and it is remarkable that the Kshetriya, or royal caste of warriors, appears to have held the first rank, above that

* The tenets of pure Boodhism are decidedly opposed to the existence of castes.

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of the Brahmins. These two higher castes have now disappeared. The royal race is nearly, if not quite extinct, and there are no Brahmins in Ceylon, excepting a very few, who have come over from India. The remainder, including the Vaissa and Shoodra castes, have but few of the prejudices and scruples to which the Hindoos cling so tenaciously. They have no objections to eat what a European has touched; and I am told that many of them eat monkeys—a proceeding which a Hindoo would consider worse than cannibalism. The wanderow, or hairy ape, which is very common in the forests, is considered quite a delicacy. There are, however, some tribes of outcasts in Ceylon who are shunned by all others, their very breath being accounted pollution. There is a singular race of men, called the Veddahs, inhabiting the forests, and living in a perfectly wild state, subsisting by the chase, and possessing no property save their bows and arrows. They are said to have no religion whatever, nor any notion of a Supreme Being; no idea of right and wrong; no names, even, to distinguish one another. Some attempts have, of late years, been made to bring this class within the pale of civilisation, but without much success. The Veddahs are supposed to be the aborigines of the island, and to have been driven into the forests, when Ceylon fell under Indian dominion. They are now in precisely the same state, as in the time of old Knox, who describes them accurately; and in

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this condition they have remained, probably, for more than two thousand years. The Honourable Steuart Mackenzie, when governor of Ceylon, took much interest in this wild people, and persuaded some of them to settle, build houses, and cultivate the ground. A few continue to do so, but their example has been little followed. The Veddahs can rarely be induced to approach any habitation, and they invariably shun all contact with other persons. I have not yet seen any of them.

The Cingalese, like other Boodhists, are entitled to possess only one wife; but their kings seem to have had a dispensation to please themselves in this respect, as many of these princes had numerous queens. One singular custom prevails here, and which is, I believe, by no means in accordance with the tenets of Boodhism, namely, polyandry. A woman will frequently marry two or three brothers, all of whom are her husbands at the same time. Revolting as this practice must be, to our ideas of propriety and decency, it is, nevertheless, very common in Ceylon. Here, as in India, woman is a degraded being; and man, in consequence, proportionably barbarous. It has been very truly observed, that no improvement that takes place in either sex can possibly be confined to itself, as each sex is a mirror to the other. Before Asiatics in general can hope to be civilised, they must learn to treat their females otherwise than as mere pieces of furniture or beasts of burden.

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The people of Ceylon have the same faith in charms, spells, and judicial astrology, &c., as the Hindoos; and they are equally attached to their old customs, although they have not that inveterate repugnance to all strangers that characterises the exclusive Indian. They bury their dead, excepting some of the head men and other great folks, whose bodies are burned on a pile with much ceremony.

On my return home, Mr. Stainton showed me a piece of native jewellery, which had been entrusted to him for sale, — a specimen of the barbaric taste of the Cingalese nobility. This was a ring which had belonged to the prime minister of the last king of Kandy; and such a mass of precious metal and gems, as few would choose to burden their finger with. The collet was as large as the palm of my hand, set with a large diamond in the centre, twenty-eight smaller diamonds, eight emeralds, and about sixty rubies. A more cumbrous trinket I never saw.

Next morning, I went up a hill immediately behind the barracks and parade ground, having the flagstaff planted on its top, to obtain a view of the town and its vicinity. Kandy consists of two large streets and three smaller ones, all lying parallel, connected by dirty lanes, and surrounded by dirty suburbs. On one side of the town stands Government House, and on the opposite side are the barracks and parade ground of the Queen's troops. In front extends the lake, with

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the barracks of the Ceylon Rifles at one end; and behind rises a green hill, with houses on its summit. All the surrounding country is a collection of picturesque hills and valleys. One of the highest of the former is the Mattena-pattena (Anglicè—Mutton Button!), the summit of which has been cleared for coffee planting, as this shrub grows best on high ground. The Mahâvelli Gunga river sweeps round the greater part of the situation of the town, at a distance of three or four miles. Kandy was formerly unhealthy during a great part of the year; but since the town and some neighbouring marshes have been thoroughly drained, the place has been rendered perfectly salubrious. The greater portion of H. M.'s 15th Regiment, and a detachment of the Ceylon Rifles, are quartered here at present. With the exception of the officers of these troops and their families, there are but few Europeans resident at Kandy. In the neighbourhood there are, however, many British planters resident on their estates.

The lake, which is partly artificial, adds much to the appearance of the town. On a small island, at a little distance from the shore, stands the powder-magazine — an excellent locality, on account of security from fire. The Library and Reading-rooms are upon the bank, hard by this island: the long room being ornamented with a full-length portrait of Sir E. Barnes, to whom Ceylon owes a tribute of no small gratitude, for

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all the great improvements which he effected during the period of his rule. The only thing I ever heard alleged against this excellent governor is the great amount of compulsory labour he enforced on the natives. But it must be considered that unpaid labour was exacted by all former Cingalese princes and rulers; and Sir E. Barnes employed it solely in useful works for the ultimate benefit of the country.

The new Church, which has been erected not far from the temples, is a spacious and handsome building; but I could not help regretting to see the large window in the chancel, which is of coloured glass, covered with representations of the twelve Apostles, and several of the Prophets. This, in a Christian church, in a Heathen land, is a circumstance most reprehensible. Any benighted Pagan, accustomed to adore the figures of his gods painted in his temples, will naturally suppose these to be the gods to whom we pay our devotions! A few marble monuments are within the church, the interior of which is scarcely finished, one of them being to the memory of the famous elephant-slaying Major Rogers.* Government House, built by Sir E. Barnes, is situated on high ground, in a cool, airy locality, and the grounds attached to it are well laid out. The

* Major Rogers, who was killed by a flash of lightning in 1846, is said to have shot upwards of 1400 elephants with his own hand.

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Governor usually resides here for a few weeks annually.

At Peradenia, near the bridge on the Kandy side, are the Botanical Gardens, which are well worthy of a visit. These contain every species of tree and plant known in the island—some of them very rare and curious. They are superintended by a Mr. Thwaites, whose dwelling is situated within the enclosure.

Another object of interest, is a tree near the bank of the river, at some distance below Government House, known by the name of "Davie's Tree," and notorious as the spot where British soldiers were induced to surrender, and were afterwards massacred by the Kandyans, through the cowardice of their commanding officer, Major Davie. I shall recount briefly the circumstances which led to this unhappy catastrophe, which occurred in 1803.

The King of Kandy died in 1798 without issue, and without nominating any successor. The right to name the successor then devolved, according to Kandyan law, on the chief *adigar*, or prime minister, one Pilimi Talava, a talented but unprincipled man, who nominated a youth of the royal race of the kings of Madura, in southern India, from which stock the late king and preceding kings of Kandy were also descended. This young man was crowned as King Vikrama Raja Singha. Soon afterwards the *adigar*, who was of Cingalese blood, and who regarded the royal

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family as interlopers on account of their Hindoo origin, began to intrigue against the monarch whom he had elevated to the throne; and to effect the young king's ruin, contrived to involve him in hostilities with the British, then powerful on the coast. The town of Kandy was taken by British troops, Vikrama Raja deposed, and another relation of the royal family, named Mootusâmi, believed to be friendly to our interests, placed on the throne. This man was proclaimed king, and a treaty concluded with him on March 8th, 1803. The deposed prince, who was warmly supported by the Kandyans, now began to annoy the British occupants of his capital by skirmishing and bush-fighting, offering rewards for the heads of Englishmen, and harassing the troops in every possible way. Mootusâmi proved to be an incompetent and worthless character; and the minister, Pilimi Talava, was ready to befriend or betray us, as best suited his ambitious views; for he himself aspired to the sovereignty of Kandy. At this time the colonel commanding the garrison at Kandy died, and the command devolved upon Major Davie. The troops were very sickly, for the season was a most unhealthy one, and all communications with the coast, as well as supplies, were cut off by the insurgent adherents of the deposed king. The town was then blockaded, and the British garrison attacked by the Kandyans, while the Englishmen were so reduced by illness as to be scarce able to resist, and the native

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troops were daily deserting to the enemy. In this critical position Major Davie was induced to capitulate, and to evacuate Kandy, delivering up all the stores, &c., to the enemy, upon an agreement that he and his troops, together with the king Mootusâmi, should be permitted to go free. He was accordingly allowed to march away with nearly 450 followers, European and native, and Mootusâmi; leaving behind nearly 150 English soldiers sick in hospital. When this band had reached the spot where the well-known tree stands, and were making preparations for crossing the river, the Kandyans came up in great numbers and demanded that Mootusâmi should be delivered up to them. Davie having complied with this request, the unfortunate prince was carried back to Kandy, and there put to death. The native troops, alarmed at the position of affairs, began to flee in every direction, leaving the small company of British surrounded by their Kandyan enemies. An order was then given to Davie and his company to lay down their arms and surrender themselves prisoners; and with this command, the Major, with a degree of pusillanimity which it is difficult to account for, complied. Davie and two officers who were with him, were taken back to Kandy and put in confinement, while the unfortunate soldiers, thirty-four in number, were, one after another, deliberately butchered. In the meantime, the sick left in the hospital at Kandy were all murdered on

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the spot. The two officers who had accompanied Davie, died in confinement; but the Major himself lived for many years after, a sort of prisoner at large. It is said that at one time, his liberty was offered him, but he did not choose again to look any of his countrymen in the face. He adopted the Cingalese dress and habits of life, and had a Cingalese woman for his wife. I have heard that some of his progeny are still living in the neighbourhood of Kandy. There is now living in the town, an old man, of Kaffir origin, who acted as executioner of the soldiers who, by Davie's directions, had laid down their arms at the tree. He was employed to decapitate them with a two-handed sword. This interesting individual was pointed out to me.

The Kandyans, I may observe, are a larger race of men than the Cingalese of the coast provinces. They have a saucy, independent mien, but are exceedingly indolent and thriftless.

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CHAP. V.

Journey from Kandy to Nuera Ellia. The Talipot Tree. — Gampalla. — Pussiláva. — The Coffee Plant.—Ramboddé.—Romantic Scenery. —Table-land of Nuera Ellia.

HAVING seen the "lions" of Kandy, I next determined to visit Nuera Ellia; and for this purpose hired a gig and horse, there being no coach on this road. The distance is forty-seven miles in a southern direction. After crossing the bridge of Peradenia, the route turns to the south, passing through the most picturesque and beautiful country that can be imagined. Many varieties of the palm grow in this region, some of which I had never seen before. Besides the cocoanut, which requires no particular mention, there are the sago palm, with its corpulent trunk and small feathery tuft of leaves—the jaggery palm (caryota urens), with long drooping leaflets like the tendrils of the weeping willow—the areca or betel-nut, tall, straight and slender, like an arrow shot down from the skies, and the famous talipot, which grows to the height of a hundred

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feet, and the gigantic fan-shaped leaf of which, is large enough to shelter eight or ten persons from the rain. This tree flowers only once, after attaining its full size; and having produced its fruit containing the seed, it droops and dies. The talipot is to be found only in certain parts of the island, and never in a wild state. A good deal of fiction has been written regarding this celebrated tree—

> "Ceylon's giant palm,
> Whose buds fly open with a sound
> That shakes the pigmy forests round."

Thunberg, the Swedish botanist, has stated that the sheath which envelops the flower, bursts with a report like a cannon! This assertion is, however, remote from the truth; as the blossom does not burst suddenly, but opens gradually and noiselessly, like any other flower. The liquor called "toddy," from the Hindee name *tâdee* or *târee,* is obtained from various kinds of palms, particularly the cocoa, palmyra, jaggery, and date. It is nothing more than the sap of the tree, procured by cutting off one of the long leaves, and fastening an earthen pot to the stump: in the morning, a quantity of the fluid is found collected in the pot. When drank fresh, it is not unlike ginger beer; but if left for some hours exposed to the sun, it ferments and turns sour, and in this state possesses considerable intoxicating power. Arrack is produced by dis-

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tilling this fermented toddy*; and by boiling it down, a coarse kind of sugar, not unlike the maple sugar of America, is obtained. Almost every part of the palm is turned to account, and applied to some serviceable purpose. An endless variety of articles is made from this useful tree, including food, drink, clothing, and utensils of every kind.

Twelve miles from Kandy, I halted at Gampalla, a large, thriving village, prettily situated. Here is an excellent rest-house, where I breakfasted and fed my horse, quitting the place a little before midday. A mile from Gampalla, I crossed the winding Mahâvelli Gunga in a large flat boat; and about four miles further on, a wooden bridge supported on two brick piers, conducted across a smaller river, the name of which has escaped my memory. The banks of this stream were finely wooded, and rose to a considerable height, forming a deep valley below, which was chiefly covered with *patna*, or grass land. Hereabouts I saw a good deal of rice cultivation. The rice-plats were ranged in tiers or narrow terraces, one above another, down the side of a hill; the water necessary for the irrigation of the crop, pouring from the higher tiers into the lower. An inferior sort of rice is also grown, without artificial irrigation, depending solely on the rain. The Cingalese are slovenly

* The Batavia arrack is a different spirit, and is, I believe, made from rice.

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husbandmen. I have heard that in some places, they fasten the plough to the tail of the oxen that draw it; as they used formerly to do in some parts of Ireland, sagely arguing that the tail of the animal could be intended for no other purpose than to save harness!* The Cingalese plough is a small and light article, much like the Indian.

Beyond this river, the road commences gradually to ascend, and the vegetation denotes a colder climate: palm trees become scarce; and ferns, brambles, and other plants common in Europe, make their appearance. Numerous streamlets pouring down from the hills intersect the road, and are crossed by stout wooden or stone bridges. The cottages on the wayside are of the "wattle and daub" order, being constructed of posts driven into the ground, interlaced with long pliant sticks and twigs, filled up and plastered with mud.

There are remarkably few birds in the woods of Ceylon—at least in such part of the island as I have seen. The feathered tribes being very numerous in India, their scarcity here is rather striking. I observed many tree-lizards (much like that called a "bloodsucker" at Madras) of a bright green colour, with scarlet heads—altogether very pretty little animals.

* In 1634, during the reign of Charles II., an act was passed by the Irish Parliament prohibiting ploughing and harrowing with horses fastened by the tail, under penalty of fine and imprisonment.

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Pussilâva, about twenty-three miles from Kandy, is a lovely spot. The country around is cleared from forest, and chiefly planted with coffee, which may now be considered the chief product of Ceylon. There are two rest-houses here, both kept by Englishmen; but I made no stay, as I intended to halt and pass the night at the next station. The country, beyond this place, is one entire grove of coffee shrubs: the neat cottages belonging to the planters appearing here and there—while on the top of every green hillock stand the storehouses for the precious bean—long wooden erections, not unlike soldiers' barracks.

Some have maintained that coffee is indigenous to Ceylon; but this is rather an untenable assertion. It is generally supposed that the plant was unknown here, till introduced by the Dutch, in 1723. It is now the principal commercial product of the island. The export of coffee from Ceylon now amounts to about 330,000 cwt. annually, which will be worth about 800,000*l.* A hundredweight of the best-planted coffee will cost from 30*s.* to 60*s.*; while the inferior kind, commonly called *native* coffee, which grows wild, is much cheaper. The plant produces one crop yearly, and in good land will last for a dozen years or longer; while, in poor soil, it decays and dies after bearing three or four crops. The average produce of the island is from five to six hundredweight per acre: very rich and favourable soil has been known to bear fifteen hundred-

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weight an acre, but poor ground will not produce more than two. In some parts of the island, the crop is ripe for gathering in summer, and in others, not until autumn or winter; indeed, I am told that it is no unusual sight to see flowers, green berries, and ripe fruit, all at once in the same plantation.

The fruit, or berry, when ripe, resembles a small cherry, of a bright red colour. After gathering, the berries are put into an apparatus called the "pulper," containing a roughened cylinder, which, turning round, separates the outward pulp of the berry from the beans which it contains. The beans, enclosed in a tough pellicle, named the "parchment" (which the pulper does not strip off during the process of removing the pulp), are then spread out on a flat terrace of chunam, denominated the "barbacue," and thoroughly dried in the sun. The pulp is commonly used for manure. Previous to packing and shipping the coffee for England, the beans are cleared of the parchment in a mill. This process of preparing coffee is, I believe, much the same as that pursued in the West Indies. The Arabs manage somewhat differently. They do not pulp their coffee, but dry the entire berry in the sun, and then remove the shrivelled pulp and parchment both together in a mill.

The coffee plantations in Ceylon are subject to a peculiar blight, termed the "bug," a small insect, which commits sad havoc, and for which no

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remedy or mode of prevention is known. This insect destroys the leaves and berries, but apparently does not injure the plant itself, as the shrub will bear another crop on the following year. The labourers employed on the coffee plantations are almost all Coolies from India. The immigration of these Coolies, from the southern parts of the peninsula of India, commenced in 1839, and it is said that there are now nearly 70,000 of them in this island. They usually stay two or three years, and then go back to their own country with their savings.

The Cingalese is too indolent to work, and he is content to allow his more industrious rival to earn and carry off the wages, which, if he chose to exert himself, he might acquire without travelling from his home and family. Though coffee is much drank, both by natives and Europeans in Ceylon, I never tasted a good cup of this "sober berry's juice" in the island. They use it when far too new, and the beverage has in consequence a rank flavour, which some persons pretend to like, but which, to my taste, is most disagreeable. Besides this, they pay no attention to roasting the bean, an operation which should require the greatest care.

The life of a coffee planter is rather laborious. They are obliged to take much exercise, and are constantly exposed to the weather, the greater part of their time being spent in the open air; but their robust frames and ruddy countenances

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bear witness to the salubrity of the climate of this island. With similar exposure to sun and rain in India, a man's lease of life would rarely be otherwise than a short one. Most of these planters are gentlemen in every sense of the word, though there are, of course, some exceptions. Very few are married men; indeed, European ladies are very scarce in Ceylon, a defect which time and intercourse with home will doubtless remedy. The planters are in general hospitably inclined, and glad to bid a stranger welcome.

Pussilâva is nearly surrounded by hills, but all at some distance. The nearest and largest is denominated the Peacock Mountain, from some fancied resemblance it bears to a couchant peacock. Its green sides are covered, nearly up to the peak, with coffee.

The tolls upon the road, at first appear a vexatious exaction to the traveller from India, where such a tax is not known. The impost is rather high: sixpence for a horse, fifteenpence for horse and gig, and two shillings for a two-horsed vehicle. At the distance of a few miles past Pussilâva, I observed the ground covered in many places with a kind of long, coarse grass, which is unfit for pasture. All the grass land and jungles are infested by a troublesome little creature, called the Ceylon leech, which, though scarcely three-quarters of an inch in length, is a most determined bloodsucker, and capable of giving great annoy-

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ance. These little reptiles, guided apparently by the sense of smell, attack the unwary pedestrian in numbers, and getting up his trowsers, and through every aperture in his dress, will relieve him of a considerable amount of the stream of life, before he is aware of their presence. No dangerous consequences, however, I am informed, result from their attacks. The planters and others frequenting the woods and fields on foot, wear what are termed leech-gaiters, to defend themselves from this insidious foe. These are like large stockings made of linen, and drawn over the foot and leg, outside of the trowser. Cattle suffer dreadfully from the leeches, which fasten on them in myriads, while the poor animal is quite unable to avoid or to get rid of them.

In the afternoon I reached Ramboddé, thirty-one miles from Kandy, and sixteen from Nuera Ellia, where I was to remain for the night. The road had been gradually ascending, and the rising ground upon which the rest-house stands, is fully 3200 feet above the level of the coast. The climate was delightfully cool, so as to make me appreciate the comfort of warm clothing. The rest-house is a small mansion recently built, kept by Mr. Stone, a very civil and obliging Englishman. Nothing can be more beautiful than its situation. The high ground overlooks the broad valley of Kotmalee, a fertile and highly-cultivated vale, extending far below; and the sides of the landscape are bounded by rocky mountains, with

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waterfalls pouring down from their peaks, and dark forests climbing their brows. To the southward lies a huge wall of mountains (precisely what would be in India styled a *ghaut*) leading up to the high table land of Nuera Ellia.

As I intended leaving at an early hour on the following morning, I was desirous of seeing as much as I could, while daylight lasted, of this charming spot; and so having housed my horse and vehicle, I set off on foot, with Mr. Stone to guide me.

I shall not attempt to describe the lovely scenery of this spot, it being so far beyond my feeble powers of language. I fully believe that, in majestic and picturesque scenery, this island is not surpassed by any portion of the known world —but this must be seen to be appreciated and known—it cannot be described in words or painted on canvas.

However, that the natural beauties of Ceylon may not be passed over without due mention and eulogy, I take the liberty of here inserting, at length, the following specimen of versification, from a Colombo periodical,—a proof that the denizens of the Cinnamon Isle may occasionally be visited by the tuneful Nine,—albeit I incline to suspect that the Muse, who guided the composition of this gem of poesy, must have been partaking too freely of the nectar of Olympus, or in a state of temporary insanity; for it displays flights of fancy such as the most skilful reader of

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riddles might be puzzled to comprehend. It will be observed that the author of this wanton production of genius, when hard pushed for a rhyme, introduces any word that may answer the purpose without the slightest reference to the meaning thereof—a measure which evinces a boldness of originality, quite refreshing to contemplate; and which, if it renders his lucubrations not particularly intelligible, at least invests them with the rare charm of novelty:—

SUNSET AND MOONLIGHT.

HEWAHETTE.

"It was a spot where nature smiled,
In rich luxuriance sweetly wild."
Ceylon Anthology.

The flitting twilight of our Tropic isle,
Upon the scene its varied lustre threw;
Each little blade, and forest lord senile,
Each vale and mountain caught a chaster hue;
The truant stream's rough ripples smoother grew,
And scarcely murmured as they ran along;
And songless birds in rainbow feathers flew,
To join their lonely mates, or jocund throng,
And roost the happy night the verdant boughs among.

Our ambling ponies trode the hilly way;
Their measured pace confessed their native care,
And bade us fearless see where nature lay.
Oh! 'twas a lovely eve! the cooling air
Our spirits braced, and fanned their flowing hair;
The rayless atmosphere with dew unwet—
The florid sky bright clouded here and there—
The still wan moon—the restless stars that let
Their sheen lids ope and close—too soon to twinkle yet.

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Dim in the west the mighty *Knuckles* lift
  Their giant fist; and *Doombere's* sweet vale
Slept like low clouds of smoke without a drift.
  But fain we left the slowly darkening dale,
To pierce the gloom which shrouds the woody pale,
  Where the black gulph which yawned and gaped beside—
The dismal scene—the torrent's roaring wail—
  The snorting steeds spent by the toilsome ride—
The lofty solitude—our halcyon thoughts divide.

Oh! like cold dew-drops to the burning thirst
  Of some lone warrior dying in the field,
Was the mild splendour now upon us burst,
  Which sudden issue from the wood revealed;—
Moon-lit *patnas*, with buffaloes concealed
  Mid waving lemon grass, whose fragrance woo'd
The sense alive to pleasures of the weald:
  Black rocks like browsing tuskers at their food,
Caused a keen throb and laugh mid other thought t' intrude.

The *Gemini* above their twin-proud peaks,
  Like haughty Titans to Olympus rear;
The wavy outline, and dim shady streaks
  Of distant hills relieved the prospect near.
Sheen little lamps now 'gan to wink and leer,
  And told where weary planters had their home;
And far away from any kindred sphere,
  Shone the bright light—where we would cease to roam,
Which lit the friendly lodge with plain and grassy dome.

Fantastic outlines of the mountains nigh,—
  The changing aspect of the landscape far—
Prospective views of *Delta* towering high,
  And shadowy *Peacock Hill* in prideful par;—
Blue heaven filled with each created star,
  And the sweet full moon looking down so kind!
There is nought here such grandeur chaste could mar,
  Nor those blest souls and joyous spirits bind,
Which soar aloft for thought, but where they transport find.

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Full soon we ford a broad and gurgling stream,
Whose pebbly beach and rocky bed constrain
Many within its icy crystal cream,
Their thirst to slake, or bodies dip amain.
Our jaded steeds refreshed, we sped again
Until upon our comrades' fertile grounds,
And weedless loam exposed, we drew the rein.
The watchful dogs now ken our canter's sounds,
And distant echo with their gleeful barks rebounds.

—— Go, tend our gallant ponies well, my boy —
Quaff we the life blood of the luscious vine.
And while the juice can please, let nothing cloy
The resting hours allowed us ere we dine.
Mark those dwarf plants of thousands in a line.
The boughs luxuriant, and the lusty stalk,
The foliage green 'neath which *those* berries shine,
Of *Lanka's* "hobby-horse" which guide the walk;
And note the forest gloom, and stale uncultured balk.

And that snug cottage with its roof rude thatched,
Its homely chimney peering o'er the grass,
Its arch, its site, its order are unmatched;—
And it had pictures of a foreign class,
Whereof one seemed belike a charming lass,
Whose withering scorn her swain's bold hope repays.
But *all is vanity* — and ills amass
More sweets than bitters for our future days,
For as we live, we feel they less and less amaze.

Oh! country mine, so lovely in thy tears!
Thine are the claims of Beauty in Despair.
Land of my childish hopes, and youthful fears!
Grave of my sires, and my affections' bier!
Fount of my sacred thoughts, and anxious care!
When shall the charm which blasts thy planet end?
Oh! not thy own wild moan, thy daughter's prayer —
Not all the hearts and deeds thy children blend.
Yet ease thy aching brow, or one sharp pang forefend.

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So much for Ceylon Byronism! The Laureateship being now vacant, I should certainly recommend the rhymer to proceed to England, and offer himself to her Majesty as a candidate for the honour.

Next morning, having breakfasted at sunrise, I quitted the rest-house of Ramboddé and continued my route. About a mile distant, the ascent of the road becomes more abrupt and decided, leading up the mountains in a zig-zag direction. The foot of this ascent is the situation chosen for a small Chapel lately erected. The rest-house was formerly here, but the locality was found to be damp from the spray and foam of two waterfalls hard by. The village of Ramboddé is a small straggling collection of native huts. From hence, for a distance of nearly fourteen miles, the road ascends zig-zag up the face of this mountain range. I soon got into the regions of mist, with which the crests of the hills were covered—wet, raw, and piercingly cold. The natives I saw on the road were clad in tunics and jackets of thick coarse blue cloth, and every one had his *cumlie,* or plaid of brown woollen stuff, wrapped round his shoulders. I observed that all the bullocks drawing carts up or down this road had their feet enveloped in pieces of raw hide, tied over the hoof—this, it seems, effectually prevents their slipping on the steep miry way; for on account of the prevailing mists and fogs, and the frequency of rain, some-

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times very heavy, the path is seldom in a dry state during a great part of the year.

In one place the road is nearly overshadowed by a formidable mass of rock, hanging ominously over the heads of passers by, like Dante's rock of Purgatory. In many parts, the forest which clothes the mountains has been levelled by the axe; and heaps of timber lie scattered about, half decayed. Gigantic ferns, like trees, may be seen here and there, in the higher regions.

My progress was necessarily slow; and I frequently walked, in order to ease the horse's labour and restore the circulation in my own limbs, which were nearly numbed with cold. At length I reached level ground, and passing through a gorge in the hills, entered on the plain of Nuera Ellia, where the houses with their smoking chimneys at once impressed me with an idea of comfort. These houses are mostly built like English cottages, with thatched roofs. Two or three are roofed with corrugated iron, shining white, as if covered with snow. After so many hours' exposure to the cold and raw weather, I must own I experienced no small satisfaction in finding myself seated opposite to a blazing wood fire in Carruthers' lodgings.

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CHAP. VI.

Nuera Ellia.—Its great Salubrity.—Excursion to the Summit of Pedrotallagalla.—Emeute in Ceylon in 1848.—*Peace-mongers and Ruffians.*

The plain of Nuera Ellia, which is 6250 feet above the level of the sea, is six or seven miles in circumference, and is bounded by hills covered with jungle, some of them having rocky crests. The bazar or village, situated on the north side, is a small collection of houses, mostly native; and round the sides of the plain, are scattered the various private houses with gardens attached to them. The centre is swampy, and part of the soil black, somewhat like peat-moss in Scotland. Near the village, a small stream of water springs from the foot of a hill; this is the source of the great Mahâvelli Gunga river. A great part of the plain is under cultivation; the staple produce consisting of potatoes, which are of excellent quality, and are sent from hence to all parts of the island. Pease, cabbages, and many other English vegetables also thrive here as well as in any part of the world. The uncultivated portion of the plain is covered with long grass and brushwood, among

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which bloom a variety of wild flowers. Magnificent rhododendrons, attaining the size of goodly trees, are to be seen in every direction—bramble bushes, reminding one of schoolboy days at home—and that species of phýsalis, variously named Brazil cherry, winter cherry, or Cape gooseberry, grow in abundance at the skirts of the surrounding hills.

This delightful spot was first made known to Europeans about thirty years ago; but was not frequented by them till after 1829, when Sir E. Barnes, having accidentally visited it, was charmed with its fine situation and climate, and built a house here, also establishing a station for military invalids. Immediately after this, several other parties began to build houses, the bazar was erected, and the settlement named Nuera Ellia, signifying "town of light."

The barracks and magazine are situated at some little distance off the plain, upon a rising ground. At present a detachment of H.M.'s 15th, consisting of two officers and one hundred men, is here quartered. There are two rest-houses or lodgings established here, but neither of them very good; and the bazar is but indifferently supplied. A new chapel is being erected on a high ground on one side of the plain. At present Divine service is held in the *kutchery* or office of the Government agent, and performed by the resident chaplain.

The air of Nuera Ellia is very salubrious, and

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the climate wonderfully mild and temperate, considering that the station lies within seven degrees of the Equator. The only drawback at this time of the year, is the great prevalence of rain and mist, both of which occur rather too frequently to be convenient or agreeable. The thermometer ranges during the year between 30° and 75° Fahrenheit, and the heat is never oppressive. The settled fair season lasts from December till April, and then I believe the climate to be delicious. The winter nights are very cold, and in the mornings, the ground is covered with hoar-frost. From May until the end of November, the season is wet, and though fair weather often occurs, it cannot be depended upon for a single day. At present, a cold, raw fog envelops the plain nearly every morning and evening, and during the day there are alternate showers of rain and gleams of sunshine.

This station, as well as many other parts of the island, would afford a fine field for British emigrants. Labour is much required, and the means of living easily obtained. Europeans of the lower classes settled in Ceylon do not in general thrive as they might do; and this is owing to the dissipated and expensive habits, in which so many of them unfortunately indulge.

One morning, shortly after my arrival here, I made an excursion up the Pedrotallagalla, a mountain lying on the north-east corner of the plain, the summit of which is the highest point

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of land in Ceylon, being 8350 feet above the level of the sea. The name of this mountain, properly *Peddura-talla-galla,* I am told, signifies "Mat-rush Rock," and has been given on account of a species of rush, used for making mats, which grows plentifully hereabouts. The mountain is completely covered with dense forest; and a narrow zigzag path, cut through the tangled jungle, leads up its steep sides. The top is flat for the space of a few yards square, and here the trees have been cut away, and the ground levelled. A pile of stones, some nine or ten feet high, supports an apology for a flagstaff, but it is long since any flag has been hoisted here. Some rhododendron bushes and a shrubby plant bearing a pink flower, the name of which I am ignorant of, were growing about the summit.

I was very fortunate in having chosen a fine and sunshiny morning, the only one I have witnessed since my arrival, for the excursion, as I was able to enjoy the magnificent view, under a clear sky, unincumbered by clouds or mist. The prospect is most extensive, but without much variety, consisting chiefly of long ranges of mountain tops and dark lines of valleys, all covered with the thick forest which clothes nearly the whole island. One of the most conspicuous objects is the well-known mountain, called by us Adam's Peak, which is distant more than thirty miles. This peak was formerly considered the highest mountain in Ceylon, but its summit is

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not actually more than 7500 feet above the sea level, which is 750 feet lower than the point on which I stood. Adam's Peak is, however, the more striking and conspicuous of the two, as it appears to rise abruptly from comparatively low ground; while the Pedrotallagalla owes its pre-eminent height to its being situated upon lofty table-land.

Adam's Peak, called by the Cingalese Samenella, is besides invested with a highly sacred character, and is a great place of pilgrimage; as its top bears the impression of a foot, or what is so considered, which the Cingalese hold to be the footmark of Gôtama Boodha; the Hindoos that of Siva; and the Mahomedans that of Adam, who, according to their belief, lighted upon this mountain, after his expulsion from Paradise! I may here observe that, according to the false prophet of Mecca's doctrine, Adam's paradise was not on earth, but in the heavens above; and there is some difference of opinion as to where he first lighted on earth, when turned out of this blissful abode—some opining that it was on this mountain in Ceylon, and others that it was in the vicinity of Cabool!

I will not attempt any further account of the grand prospect from this eminence. As I have said before, I am a bad hand at describing scenery; and indeed, I think it one of those subjects which cannot be successfully depicted in words,—language being quite inadequate to the purpose. No

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description of the beauties of natural scenery, I ever read, has conveyed to my mind the least idea of the reality.

It is difficult to describe the striking and delightful contrast between the cold, invigorating climate of Nuera Ellia, and the heat, languor, and exhausting temperature of India. Here one can go about out of doors all day, without danger; and warm clothing is absolutely requisite. When I left Madras, the weather was so relaxing and oppressive, that to move from one room to another amounted to a fatiguing task, and clothes were a burden. There is, however, too much rain and fog, at this season; and a little less humidity in the atmosphere would greatly improve the climate. The present August resembles a wet October in Britain.

A report has lately prevailed, which has caused no small alarm to the planters and burghers of Ceylon,—namely, that the Island stands some chance of being, in a short time, annexed to the East India Company's territories, and managed by commissioners appointed from Madras. If any such prospect really impended, there would, undoubtedly, be sufficient cause for apprehension, —the oppressive system of land-revenue, which prevails in India, if introduced here, as it probably would be, must prove a curse to the whole community of the Cinnamon Isle; but as matters stand, these fears are premature, and probably quite groundless. The Company has quite enough

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to do, to manage our extensive and increasing possessions in Hindostan, without being further burdened with the care of Ceylon,—an island once under the control of the Madras Government, and which proved to be too heavy and difficult a charge, to remain under such management.

Intelligence has lately been received, that Lord Torrington is about to withdraw from the governorship of Ceylon. This, by some private accounts, he is permitted to do, in compliance with his own request made to the Secretary of State; and, according to others, he has been recalled by the Home Government. Opinions regarding Lord T.'s conduct as governor are very various. I have heard some persons praise his administration highly; and he seems to be, in general, well esteemed among the planters and residents,—while a certain clique at Colombo condemn him in the most unsparing manner. Without doubt, he has had a most difficult position to maintain. Soon after his arrival in 1847, he gave some cause of offence to certain parties, who, aided by the most unscrupulous and blackguard portion of the press, have since leagued together to keep up a most injurious agitation against him.

The year 1848 was a most unfortunate one for a new governor. The mercantile failures which convulsed the civilised world, and everywhere shook credit to its foundations, produced a ca-

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lamitous influence on Ceylon, as well as elsewhere. The value of property sunk to mere nothing; and men's energies were for a while paralysed. The revenue consequently diminished; and, as is often the case, unthinking people blamed the Governor for the effects of casualties, over which he could have had no possible control. Immediately after this crisis, came the Kandyan rebellion; in connexion with which unhappy affair, Lord Torrington's acts have been, both here and at home, most severely, and, as far as I can learn, most unjustly censured. Indeed, there can be no doubt that his firm, determined, and vigorous measures, on this trying occasion, were the means of saving the estates and property of British planters and merchants; and of ensuring the safety of the lives and possessions of the European inhabitants at large. As for the cruelty which he is said to have exercised, I must say that considering the wickedness of the insurgents' aims and intentions, and the state of imminent danger in which the whole country was placed, these villains were treated with great clemency and forbearance.

This insurrection originated with some of the Boodhist priesthood, who were inimical to British rule; and who, to give a colour to the contemplated revolt, determined on setting up a prince of their own creating, as claimant to the vacant throne of Kandy. Certain taxes, introduced by Lord Torrington, happened to be highly unpopular

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at the time, and various inflammatory papers were then published and circulated. The disturbance commenced on the 6th of July, 1848, when an individual of low and obscure origin was set up at Kandy as claimant to the crown, on pretence of being a scion of the old royal race. A mob riot, which then took place, was quickly quelled by the military; but on the 27th of the same month, this impostor was publicly proclaimed King of Kandy, and on the following day, a body of 4000 armed insurgents entered Matelé, a town in the Kandyan district, drove out the police, and demolished the public buildings. The district of Kandy was then placed under martial law, and a reward of 150*l.* offered for the person of the pretender. Sundry conflicts occurred between the military and the insurgent people. The town of Kornegalle was taken by the latter, and the public offices and some other houses burnt; but the rabble was soon dispersed by a small body of the Ceylon Rifles, who killed several of them. Soon afterwards, three companies of Her Majesty's 37th Regiment were conveyed from Madras by a steamer, and the rebellion was in a short time subdued. Several hundreds of rebels were captured. Of these, some were tried and shot, according to martial law; and others punished by transportation, imprisonment, and other penalties.

The pretender himself (a mere tool in the hands of others more deep and designing) was, on the

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21st of September, found concealed in a cave in the heart of a dense jungle, about eight miles distant from Matelé: he pleaded guilty before the Court at Kandy, and was sentenced to transportation for life. Martial law ceased on the 10th of October, and the *émeute* was at an end. The motive of the originators of this revolt, was doubtless a blind intention of subverting a Government, of the strength and resources of which, they had no just conception: and their followers were chiefly actuated by a hope of plunder, and a reckless love of mischief. The conduct of Lord Torrington on this trying occasion, was firm and manly, and the course he pursued judicious and effectual. It was necessary that examples should be made of some of the worst of these rebels, and this was done, but with a lenient and sparing hand.

What utter perversion of terms and of justice is this, which would stigmatise such conduct as bloodthirsty, cruel, and uncalled-for! Yet public meetings are held in the towns of Britain, where ignorant prating blockheads think fit to censure the acts and impugn the motives of the Governor of Ceylon, as if he was some monster of cruelty and oppression, fit to be held up for public execration!

One of the most reprehensible, and, unfortunately, prevalent characteristics of this age, is that morbid sympathy with insubordination and crime, and maudlin sentiment in favour of rascals, rebels, and felons of every description—a feeling

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which would be only ridiculous and contemptible if it were not lamentably common. It would seem to be the creed of these sympathisers, that all constituted authorities must necessarily be tyrants and oppressors; that our army and navy, Britain's safeguard and pride, are nothing but gangs of hired ruffians and assassins; that all punishment of vice and crime is unnecessary and unwarrantable cruelty; that all criminals must be objects of compassion, if not of admiration; and that black or coloured men can do no wrong! Murderers are to be regarded as victims of strong impulses and sensibilities, which must be pitied and excused; rebels are heroes and patriots of gallant spirit, whom circumstances have forced into a war of liberty and self-defence; robbers and vagabonds are unfortunate innocents, crushed by the iron hand of society and laws, who are to be protected and tenderly treated — anything but punished.

While, on the other hand, any act of justice relieving the community of a thorough pest and curse, is looked on as a legal murder; and any gallant exploit achieved by our soldiers or seamen, in the cause of humanity, peace, and the well-being of society, is viewed in the light of a sanguinary outrage, that cannot be sufficiently reprobated and condemned. Witness the recent meetings held in England, where numbers of ignorant loquacious demagogues, of the Cobden and Bright school, calling themselves peace associates, aborigines-protectionists, and what not,

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have been passing votes of the severest censure on the gallant Sir James Brooke, for his meritorious exertions in suppressing an abominable horde of truculent pirates and cut-throats: as if, in doing his best in the cause of humanity, to put an end to piracy and murder, and to establish peace and security, he had been guilty of some most atrocious crime! Under such circumstances it would be strange, indeed, if the conduct of the Governor of Ceylon were to escape similar pot-house and platform reprobation.

Seriously speaking, these Quaker and Peace Society principles, now so much adopted among people who ought to know better by experience, are calculated to do incredible mischief. One of their favourite doctrines is, that capital punishment ought to be abolished — a doctrine which must be utterly fallacious. The law of God has revealed, in the plainest manner, the duty of judicial authorities in regard to the shedding of blood; and unless these querulous demagogues choose to consider themselves, as perhaps they do, wiser and more merciful than their Maker, it is hard to conceive on what principle this dogma of theirs is based. I have read of a king of Poland who made an edict remitting the usual penalties of murder, stating his intention to be "to mitigate the severity of the Divine law!" It would seem that some of our English wiseacres are desirous of emulating the clemency and piety of this sapient monarch.

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They likewise profess to entertain a vast horror of our military and naval establishments, which alone preserve Britain in peace and security; and would fain abolish the army and navy, or, at least, reduce their strength, till England should declare herself, manifestly, an unresisting prey to any nation that might choose to assail her.

The idea that the characters of a good Christian and a good soldier are incompatible, is another of those silly and groundless notions which these gentry are fond of broaching. Some of the most eminent Christians of ancient and modern times, have belonged to a profession, which these peace-mongers reprobate as wicked and unhallowed. A time will undoubtedly come when men will lay aside all arms, and the art of war will no longer be learnt — we are assured of this on authority that cannot err — but that time has not yet arrived, whatever peace societies may say to the contrary. One very striking absurdity prevalent among the mass of the people in England, is the existence of a strong tendency to cry down and abuse most of our great and noble institutions, and all persons connected therewith both at home and abroad — a tendency which demagogues and popularity hunters full well know how to take advantage of. In this respect, John Bull differs greatly from his more sensible neighbours. There is no such asinine sentiment in France or America, nor would any such be tolerated there. The American popularity seeker

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must praise his country's institutions up to the skies, extolling the merits, and excusing or concealing the faults, of their systems and members; while in England, it is the common fashion to denounce and condemn them unreservedly, as if everything English must be necessarily wrong. I cannot but think Brother Jonathan's plan the best, and the most becoming, as being the most patriotic. A lavish allowance of praise may perhaps be a little fulsome and extravagant now and then; but, at any rate, it is in far better taste than the English mob orator's wholesale abuse of all that he ought to revere and to be proud of.

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CHAP. VII.

Departure from Nuera Ellia for Colombo.—Brief Sketch of Ceylon.—Its ancient Names.—Its present Government.—Language.—Christianity in Ceylon.

The wet weather having fairly set in at Nuera Ellia, so that it rained almost incessantly, I found myself obliged, to my no small regret, to quit that station. Taking advantage of the first fair day I had seen for nearly three weeks, I started down the pass on foot, being unable to procure a vehicle, accompanied by my servant and two coolies carrying my baggage. Had the accommodations been better, I should have staid, and waited patiently for more genial weather, but the rest-house in which I lodged was far from comfortable. Not much can be said in commendation of rest-houses. They are convenient for travellers certainly, as hospitality is a virtue not much practised in Ceylon except among the planters, but they are not well suited for a permanent residence. The accommodations are poor, the attendance scanty, the beds and furniture not over clean, the provisions bad, and

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the cookery worse. Most of them have stores attached, in which European goods, such as cloth, blankets, cutlery, powder and shot, preserves and liquors, all of a very inferior description, are sold for the convenience of travellers and neighbouring planters. The buildings, like too many houses in Ceylon, are ill constructed, being cheaply run up, and badly plastered. The doors and windows seldom shut close, and the roof is not always waterproof. The day continued fair until I reached Ramboddé in the afternoon, but no sooner was I fairly housed, than a violent wind brought torrents of rain, and I became apprehensive of being detained there for some days. Next morning, however, the rising sun showed a more favourable prospect; the rain had ceased, and the dense fog was rapidly clearing off. I accordingly started early, having hired a pony, and pushed on to Gampalla. On the following morning, I rode into Kandy, and after two days' halt there, proceeded to Colombo, taking up my quarters in the Royal Hotel.

I had some conversation, this morning, with a proctor of the Court, relative to judicial proceedings. By all accounts, it would seem that the natives of Ceylon are quite as litigious as the Hindoos, and as great adepts in all manner of intrigue and roguery. Forgery of documents and signatures is executed in so dexterous a manner, that parties concerned have been led to acknowledge the imitations as their own handwriting!

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Perjury is deemed justifiable by its beneficial results, and is not considered any serious offence against morality. Bribery is carried on, as a matter of course, as if those who have the care of administering justice, possessed a right to be paid for their favourable decisions. Notwithstanding the notoriety of this species of depravity, there are not wanting influential Englishmen, here as well as in India, who contend for the purity and innocence of the natives, as compared with their own countrymen!

Two or three centuries ago, in the courts of England, the same abominations prevailed extensively. English juries were so notoriously corrupt, that the Bishop of London, writing to Cardinal Wolsey, told him that a London jury would, for a bribe, pronounce Abel to be guilty of the murder of Cain! Perjury was thought nothing of; and the wise and learned Bacon took bribes to pervert justice, while he occupied the chief seat in her tribunal.

The natives of Ceylon are of four classes, distinct from each other; namely, the Veddas, or aborigines, a wild race inhabiting the woods; the Cingalese of the coast and northern parts of the island, of mixed race, Malabar and aboriginal; the Kandyans or Cingalese of the interior, a mixture of Rajpoot and aboriginal blood; and the Moormen or Mussulmans.

It now remains for me to say a few words regarding the history, and present condition of

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the island; a subject which I shall discuss as briefly as I conveniently can.

Ceylon has possessed sundry names, conferred by different parties, and at various times, such as Lanka (the island), Singhala, Serendib (probably an abbreviation of the Indian title Sree-Runga-dwipa), and Tapoo-Râvana (isle of Râvana, a giant famous in Hindoo mythology), corrupted into Taprobane.* It is about 275 miles in length, and 145 in breadth at the broadest part. Its population does not amount to more than 1,500,000 souls, including about 7200 Europeans; for so much of the island is covered with dense jungle, that it is, upon the whole, but thinly peopled. Old Sir John Maundeville speaks of Ceylon as "an yle gode and grete, that men clepen Taprobane," and he asserts that it forms part of the dominions of that mysterious personage Prester John, and is much infested by dragons, crocodiles (or, as he calls them, "cockadrilles"), and other dangerous animals. Marco Polo declares that Ceylon was much larger in former times than in his days, as a great part of this island had crumbled away and sunk in the sea. He also makes mention of the great quantity of precious stones to be found here, which is a mis-

* I may here observe that many of the natives of India believe Ceylon to be a marvellous island, formed of a mass of pure gold, and not accessible to ordinary mortals! It would be difficult to persuade them to believe that it is under British rule, and that numbers of our steamers touch there weekly.

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take; for though stones of no great value, such as the cat's-eye, cinnamon stone, moon stone, and water sapphire, are abundant, no diamonds, emeralds, or valuable gems are indigenous; nor are the precious metals produced in any quantity.

Of the ancient history of the island, little is known. It was conquered by an Indian Rajpoot monarch, named Vijeya Singha, about 500 years before Christ, and has since been several times overrun by Malabar princes, causing a great admixture of Indian blood among the aboriginal Cingalese. The Portuguese, under Lorenzo D'Almeida, first visited Ceylon in 1505, and obtained leave to trade. About twelve years afterwards, they gained a footing in the island, warred against the native rulers, and seized upon several of the maritime provinces. In 1591 they pursued their conquests until they obtained possession of Kandy, and may be said to have then held authority over nearly the whole island. The Dutch visited Ceylon for the first time in 1602, and their admiral volunteered to assist the conquered princes against their Portuguese oppressors; an offer which was readily accepted. The conduct of these Dutch allies must occasionally have been somewhat eccentric, as in the following year, Admiral Sebalt de Weerd was put to death by the ex-King of Kandy, for having insulted that monarch while in a state of intoxication! A bloody war ensued between the Dutch and

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Portuguese, which continued for several years with varied success, until 1656, when the Dutch took Colombo, and their adversaries were eventually compelled to quit Ceylon. The native princes, however, gained little by this exchange of masters; as the Dutch treated them precisely as the Portuguese had done. In 1782, England being at variance with Holland, Lord Macartney, Governor of Madras, dispatched Admiral Hughes and Sir Hector Monro, to despoil the Dutch of their Cingalese possessions. Our forces at first met with scarcely any resistance, but further attempts were frustrated by French interference. In process of time, however, we were more fortunate, and, the power of Holland being subdued, the administration of the Government of Madras over this island, commenced in 1796. Soon afterwards Ceylon was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown.

I have previously mentioned the occurrences at Kandy in 1803, and the massacre of the British at that station. After this unhappy event, the king, whom we had deposed, was reinstated in his sovereignty, and maintained his rule in the interior, while we possessed all the maritime provinces. This prince, in process of time, began to treat his subjects after the fashion of but too many Oriental rulers, whose minds become corrupted by a course of uncontrolled and mismanaged authority, and vicious self-indulgence. In 1812, a conspiracy was formed against him; and

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the intriguing minister, who had originally placed him on the throne, plotted his assassination. The design was discovered, and the wily minister put to death. The king then became suspicious of all about him, and tyrannical to an insupportable degree; exercising dreadful cruelties on many who had formerly been his warmest friends. The people, at length growing disaffected, invited the British authorities to take possession of the Kandyan provinces. War was declared in 1815; the king was taken prisoner and sent to India; and Kandy was ceded to British rule, which was thus established over the entire island of Ceylon. King Vikrama Raja died a state prisoner in the fort of Vellore in 1832; leaving a son, whom I saw at Vellore some years ago. This boy is, I believe, since dead.

The Governor of Ceylon is aided by executive and legislative councils, which consist partly of civil servants appointed by government, and partly of unofficial members, chosen from among the principal planters and merchants. The governor draws a salary of £7000 per annum. Civil servants are sent out from England, nominated by the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and their functions are similar to those of civilians in India.* The proceedings of the legislative council are carried on openly, and the public are permitted to attend at the discussions,—instead of the

* There are about seventy-five civil servants employed on the island; and their salaries vary from 200*l.* to 1500*l.* yearly.

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closed doors and strict privacy, observed in our Indian presidencies.

The whole island is divided into five provinces; each province consisting of a number of districts. There are three judicial circuits, each circuit comprising several district courts of justice. The law, as administered in Ceylon, is according to the Roman-Dutch mode of jurisprudence, founded, like Scottish law, on the Pandects of Justinian. Trial by jury has been instituted in criminal cases, but not in civil suits; the jury consisting of thirteen members, and the majority, as in Scotland, deciding the verdict. As regards bankruptcy and "cessio bonorum," the law is nearly, if not quite, the same as in Scotland. The native Kandyan and Mahomedan laws are occasionally called into action, in questions of right. Attorneys-at-law, here called *Proctors*, are chiefly burghers or half-castes, some of whom evince no small ability as advocates. Slavery no longer exists in the island. The first steps taken for its abolition, occurred in 1838, and it was finally abolished in 1845.

The police of Ceylon is said to be good and effective, and I believe it merits the report; at least violent crimes appear to be comparatively rare. The magistrates are mostly civilians, but some of them are selected from Englishmen, not in the civil service, and their descendants. The native authorities are very numerous, ranked in the various grades of "headman," *dissauve*, *modelliar*,

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mohandram, *ratté-mahatmé*, *arachy*, *corallé*, &c., some of whom are attached to the person of the governor, and the others to the different magistrates and government agents, all over the country. The *vidahn* is a village officer, who attends to police matters, apprehends criminals and forwards them to the magistrate, and executes different orders of Government.

The military force maintained in Ceylon, usually consists of three or four of H. M.'s regiments of infantry, besides the local corps, the Ceylon Rifles. The latter may be considered a double regiment, and contains 2000 men. The governor has a body-guard of cavalry.

The annual revenue of Ceylon is about 450,000*l.*, and the expenditure has generally been somewhat larger than the income. The land revenue is trifling compared with that of India. The assessment here, is often made annually, on an estimation of the growing crop,—a plan which, in India, has been found a very imperfect one. Land is sold by Government, at the rate of one pound per acre, uncleared. In former years, it was sold as low as five shillings an acre. If purchased from private individuals, it is much dearer, especially if cleared. The greater portion of fiscal affairs is managed by civil servants, denominated Government agents, and their assistants, whose office is like that of an Indian collector and magistrate. A sum of from 50,000*l.* to 70,000*l.* is annually expended on the roads, a large proportion of the

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revenue, but certainly spent on a most beneficial object. The pearl fishery at Manaar, on the north-west of the island, formerly yielded a revenue of about 4000*l.* a year, but for some years past, there has been no fishing for pearls. It is supposed that former fisheries were prosecuted too eagerly, and the oyster-beds have been destroyed. Ceylon pearls have always been very inferior to those brought from the Persian Gulf.

The Cingalese language bears a strong affinity to those of Southern India, viz.: — the Telinga the Tamul, and the Canarese. These form a distinct group of languages, not derived from the Sanskrit, though borrowing largely from it. That of Ceylon happens to contain many Sanskrit words, either adopted directly from that ancient tongue, or through the medium of the Pâli, exactly as in English we have numerous words of Latin origin direct, or through the French, while the basis of our language is Anglo-Saxon. The Cingalese has been but little cultivated by Europeans; and I have heard that few Englishmen in Ceylon are well acquainted with it. The Pâli, or sacred language, studied by the priests only, is a very near approach to the parent Sanskrit (as Italian is to Latin), but this is still less known to our countrymen. The Tamul (the language of the south-eastern portion of the peninsula of India) has been introduced, probably at a remote period, by Indian invaders or emigrants, and is very generally used in most parts of the island. Cor-

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rupted Portuguese and Dutch are spoken in many places; and a great proportion of the better class of natives are now acquainted with English, a knowledge of which is rapidly extending.

The Cingalese character much resembles the Telinga and Canarese, and like these, is written upon palm leaves, with the style, a sharp iron prong set in a long handle. The leaves of the palmyra are here, as in India, commonly used for writing upon, but many of the sacred volumes belonging to the temples are inscribed on the huge laminæ of the talipot. In writing, the handle of the style is grasped in the right hand, and the leaf being held in the left hand, the point of the style is guided by the left thumb-nail, which is slightly notched for the purpose. In order to render the writing more conspicuous and easily read, lampblack is sometimes rubbed in. A number of these leaves, strung upon a piece of twine, forms a book, which commonly has boards of thin wood cut into the same size as the leaves, the dimensions of which are generally about from a foot to eighteen inches in length, by an inch and a half or two inches in breadth. Such volumes are far more durable than our books of paper. The implements used in writing are often worn in a case or sheath stuck in the girdle. These consist of the style, a small knife used to cut off the ends of the palm leaves, and trim them into shape, and an instrument for perforating the leaves preparatory to stringing them together.

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The best account of the habits and customs of the Cingalese is contained in the curious narrative of Robert Knox, which was published more than 160 years ago.* Knox, with his father and several comrades, was seized by the natives of Batticaloa, where the "Ann" frigate (commanded by the elder Knox) had put in, in 1659, and being carried into the interior, was detained for a period of nineteen years a slave of the King of Kandy. After making his escape and returning to his own country, he gave to the world an account of his adventures and of the people among whom he had lived. The narrative is scrupulously accurate, and shows the author to have been a man of much observation and good sense. Like most people of his age, he was a believer in magic and supernatural agency; but he does not attempt to impose on his readers with any extravagant tales.

The ecclesiastical establishment of the colony consists of clergy of the Church of England and of the Reformed Church of Holland; and besides this establishment, various missions, belonging to different classes of Christians, are labouring in the Lord's work, to conquer idolatry and win souls to Christ. The Portuguese arrogate to themselves the merit of having first brought Christianity into this island; but there is every reason to believe that it had been introduced at a far more remote period, by a mission from the

* Defoe, in his "Adventures of Captain Singleton," introduces an account of Knox and his Cingalese captivity.

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Nestorian or some still earlier Christian church in Persia. Indeed, it has been supposed that the early Persian Christians planted churches in Ceylon, previous to the subversion of the Parthian dynasty in their own country*; but as neither these churches nor any record of them now exist, it is not possible to ascertain the truth of the supposition. Sir John Maundeville makes mention of Christians in Ceylon, and though, as every one knows, the word of this venerable traveller is not greatly to be relied on, he probably speaks the truth in this instance. It is nevertheless much to be regretted that no certain information can be gained on so interesting a subject.

Roman Catholicism was introduced under Portuguese auspices by Francis Xavier, the famous Jesuit missionary, who visited Ceylon in 1544. He made converts, or what he considered converts, to Christianity by simply baptising people, which ceremony he evidently held to be all that was necessary for the purpose. To explain the doctrines of the Christian faith would, in the eyes of a Jesuit, be a piece of superfluous trouble. Xavier was certainly a most indefatigable member of the society to which he belonged, but his Christian principles were of a very questionable nature. All he ever taught his converts, if converts they can be called, in India, Ceylon, and else-

* The Parthians were driven from the Persian throne by the Sassanians, at the close of the first quarter of the third century.

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where, was to make the sign of the cross, and to repeat the Popish Catechism, which having learned, with a few unintelligible Latin prayers, they were considered fully accomplished Christians. God's everlasting Word was never circulated among them; and indeed Xavier appears to have held it in small esteem; as we are informed by his biographers that when he left Lisbon for the East, he took with him a *part* of the New Testament, which he happened to have, as it might *perhaps* be of use to him! Among the various saintly acts of this exemplary Jesuit, it is also recorded that when leaving his native land for ever, he passed by his aged mother's dwelling without seeing or bidding her farewell,—a meritorious act of self-denial worthy of all praise!

A singular and powerful body is this Society of Jesuits,—a religious order whose influence has been felt in every part of the world,—a class of zealous men who have mastered every science, and assumed the profession of tutors and instructors of their fellow creatures. Second to none in learning, they have directed the education of princes and nobles in all civilised lands, and obtained a deeply-rooted power, which no national efforts have ever succeeded in suppressing. Wily as serpents, they have fascinated, influenced, and misled men and nations. And such are the subtle and dangerous characters whom the Church of Rome employs for her corrupt purposes—to spread her doctrines—to gain influence

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by any means—to paganise Christianity, if necessary to win over the allegiance of pagans. When the North American savage despised the character of the meek and lowly Saviour, the Jesuit missionary straightway represented our Lord as a mighty warrior, who daily slew and scalped innumerable foes! When the Chinese objected to the idea of the incarnate Deity suffering death as a malefactor, the Jesuit was ready to inform them that the whole story of the crucifixion was a fable invented by the Jews!

The Roman Catholic faith will often inspire deep religious sentiment without a particle of religious principle; and when this sentiment can be thoroughly excited, the priest's end is gained; and the more he can keep his erring flock in utter ignorance of the light of Truth, the better it suits his purpose.

The first British missionaries to Ceylon were Baptists, who came hither in 1812; and two years afterwards the Wesleyans established a mission on the island. The American mission followed in 1816, and settled in the northern districts.

Christianity has, as yet, gained but little footing among the natives of this island. This is not from any determined opposition to missionary labour, or hatred to Christian doctrine, but apparently owing mainly to the frivolous unthinking character of the people, who are in general almost destitute of religious feeling, and care little or

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nothing about their own faith or any other system. One of the most gifted and industrious labourers in the Lord's vineyard of whom India can boast, spent some time among the Cingalese last year; and his impression was, that the most strenuous efforts to enlighten and Christianise them, even though blessed with success in elevating and improving them to the salvation of many, would hardly suffice, in the course of one or two generations, to transform their character into an intelligent and reflecting people.

It is not very long since missionary enterprise was almost universally scouted and ridiculed, here as well as in India. In the latter country, in particular, the Government seems to have entertained a great dread of creating political disturbances, if any attempt was made to enlighten the spiritual darkness of the people; and missionary labour was consequently regarded with much aversion and distrust. Irreligion was also then the great characteristic of Europeans in India, who were said to have left their faith behind them at the Cape of Good Hope*, and the

* To illustrate the former state of religion in India, it may be mentioned, that in 1807, not a single copy of the Bible was to be purchased at Madras. The book was unsaleable, and no shopkeeper had it. Very few of the European inhabitants of that city ever entered a church; there was not in all the Presidency a single English Missionary to the heathen; and a faithful clergyman, who endeavoured in vain to awaken his reckless countrymen, declared that if ten real Christians would save the whole country from the fate of Sodom and Gomorrha,

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example set by them was not likely to inspire the natives with any respect for Christianity. Experience has shown the fears of our Indian Government to be utterly groundless. The Hindoos, with all their talk about scruples of caste, which they are fond of bringing forward as an excuse for refusing to do what they dislike or do not wish to be troubled with, have really but little attachment to their abominable religion; and the Cingalese still less. The magic influence of a few rupees would tempt many of them to abjure their idolatry, and call themselves Christians or anything else. Anti-missionary notions are now becoming obsolete; and if held by any, are held only by the thoughtless and profane. All right-thinking persons who will take the trouble to inform themselves on the subject, cannot but be impressed with the importance, the utility, and the absolute duty of missionary enterprise,—a duty which the Word of God has revealed to and imposed on all Christian communities.

On considering all that has been attempted, the efforts made, the sums expended, and the preachers sent in all directions, it must seem strange that Christianity has made so little pro-

he did not believe that as many could be found in the whole army and civil service of Madras. In the last century people at home were little better, with some few noble exceptions. The Church of England was dead or dormant till awoke by Wesley and Whitfield boldly preaching the pure Gospel, and these zealous men were regarded as lunatics and firebrands.

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gress in heathen nations. The work of evangelization, instead of proceeding gradually towards completion, seems to be scarce begun: and the period of conversion of the world at large, when the kingdom of the Redeemer shall extend over this globe,—when "all the ends of the earth shall turn to the Lord," and "all people, nations, and languages shall serve Him,"—would appear to be as remote as it has ever been. We must not, however, judge of God's dealings by outward appearances. "His work is perfect, and all His ways are judgment." Though little fruit of missionary labour has become publicly visible, and instances of conversion have hitherto been rare, still the work is progressing silently and surely—masses of superstitions, errors, and prejudices are gradually melting away—truth is spreading—and the dominion of the Prince of this world is being quietly undermined. Men who deny the efficacy of missionary operations, are those who have never taken the trouble to get any accurate information regarding them, for such things are not commonly obtruded on the public view.*

* Although, as I have already remarked, missionary labour is not now opposed in India, as it formerly was; still there exist not a few circumstances tending to thwart its efficacy, and to deter the poor heathen from embracing Christianity. Take for example the following extract from a Bombay newspaper:—

"It must seem very strange to the natives of this country that no sooner does one of them embrace Christianity, than almost every witless European thinks them proper objects to sneer and jest at. If the missionaries and others of our com-

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Persons at home are apt to expect too much of missions; as if those who proceed to foreign lands on apostolic errands were gifted, like the Apostles of old, with supernatural powers. They forget that these institutions are but human, and that missionaries are but ordinary mortals. They know not what difficulties they have to encounter, and what distasteful tasks they are bound to undertake. There exists at home much ignorance and misconception regarding the actual condition of the heathen. Indeed, many are willing to believe these pagans to be an amiable and docile race; while their awful state of deep moral and social debasement can be understood by few, save those who have lived among them and witnessed it.

It is rather amusing to notice how the French and English deists and infidels of the last half century, have eulogised the Hindoos and their religion. If any one ever credited their assertions, he must have supposed the Hindoo system of mythology to be the most sublime, pure, and admirable that can be imagined; and the followers of this creed, to be the most virtuous, innocent, and amiable race on the face of the earth! I

munity do their best to teach and preach the Faith of Christ, most certainly many amongst us use their utmost endeavours to undermine the work of these labourers. It is no less strange than true, that the natives who turn from the worship of idols to serve the true God, meet with almost more ridicule from European (so-called) Christians, than they do from their own countrymen."

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cannot suppose, however, that these writers really believed what they gave out as their opinions. Their inveterate hatred to Christianity led them to extol whatever was diametrically opposed to it; and an impotent desire to refute and vilify the Gospel of Christ induced them to praise up to the skies, anything directly contrary to that Gospel. It is, moreover, pretty evident that these panegyrists of Hindooism knew but little regarding the system which they so liberally extolled, and were unaware of the horrid mass of abominations of which this mythology is composed.

The pagans of ancient Greece and Rome practised many vices in social life without scruple or shame; but, at the same time, they possessed much generous feeling and spirit, and exercised many rude but manly virtues, unknown to the idolator of this part of the world, whose depreciation of moral sense is so great, that scarcely any distinction is made between right and wrong.*

Besides the disregard which these heathens evince for the truths of Christianity, the missionary is himself not unfrequently an object of suspicion and dislike. No native of these dark-

* It is worthy of remark, that whereas the Greeks and Romans deified justice, truth, chastity, mercy, faith, and other virtues, and had images and temples consecrated to them, the Brahminical mythology does not afford a single deity to represent any one virtuous quality.

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ened lands will believe that he has come among them from pure and disinterested motives of philanthropy; as they cannot imagine any source of action apart from self-interest; such motives being foreign to them. The most favourable construction they can put upon his efforts and exhortations, is, that he is endeavouring to persuade them to embrace his creed, in order to obtain religious merit for himself, and to ensure his own future reward. That he should take the trouble for their sakes, and to promote their salvation, is an idea which none of them will dream of entertaining.

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CHAP. VIII.

Return from Colombo to Galle. — Excursion to Matura. — Bombay. — Salsette. — The excavated Temple of Kanhery.

An unusual quantity of rain had lately fallen in Ceylon, and the weather proved so disheartening, that I determined on bidding adieu to the island, and turning my steps elsewhere. With this intent I quitted Colombo, and proceeded to Galle, to meet the next steamer from India or China. Whither I should go I had no definite idea. I sometimes thought of revisiting Egypt and Syria, though I preferred going to some region which I had not yet visited. At Galle I remained for a week, waiting the arrival of a steamer; and, in the meantime, took a trip to Matura, on the coast, twenty-seven miles south-east of Galle. A coach runs daily from Galle to Matura and back; the vehicle itself, and the cattle supplied for it, being of the poorest description I had ever witnessed.

About fifteen miles distant from Galle, a mass of rock stands on the wayside, having sculptured upon it a human figure, about twelve feet high,

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standing in a kind of arched recess. This represents an ancient monarch of Ceylon, and is known by the name of the Koosht,ha Raja, or "leper-king." The legend connected with this piece of sculpture, depones that, in ages gone by, a certain prince was smitten with leprosy, and having besought Boodha to cure him of the loathsome complaint, the god sent a snake to guide him to a spot where he should be restored to health by drinking the milk of the cocoanuts there produced. In compliance with these directions, the king travelled hither, and was speedily cured! For a story to become current, and deemed worthy of credit among Asiatics, it is absolutely necessary that it should be sufficiently marvellous and extravagant. A tale confined within the bounds of reason and possibility, is scarce worth believing!

About a mile further on is the pretty village of Bellegamme, on the shore of a bay, where there is said to be a fine Boodhist fane, which I did not stay to inspect.

Matura is a large village, or rather town, covering a considerable extent of ground on both sides of a river, upon the banks of which stands an old fortification, a little in advance of the town. Great numbers of cocoanut trees are here planted; and many of the houses have neat gardens in front. I was disappointed in my hope of seeing the principal "lion" of the place, namely, the Cingalese giant, as he is called, a

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man of enormous size, who is a fisherman at this station. He happened to be away fishing, and the time of his return was uncertain. This individual is said to be of no very lofty stature, his height being not more than six feet eight inches; but he is formed like Scott's "black dwarf," with short lower limbs, a huge trunk and head, prodigious hands and feet, and a countenance of unrivalled ugliness. He is about forty years old, and is reported to be a very civil, intelligent, and inoffensive person. He can carry his own canoe on his shoulder from his house to the sea, a distance of a quarter of a mile; and can easily lift a log of wood, which four ordinary men are unable to move. I am sorry I did not see this prodigy.

Four miles eastward of Matura lies Dondra Head, the southernmost point of Ceylon,—a peninsula, with a grove of cocoanut trees upon it. The remains of an ancient town and numerous temples, are to be found on this peninsula; but I had no time to examine it, for, as the steamer was daily expected at Galle, I was to return thither on the same day. Immediately on my return, the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Company's good boat "Pekin" arrived from China, and I at once made up my mind to go by her to Bombay, and to proceed thence somewhere or other, as opportunity might afford. It was not without some feeling of regret, that I bid farewell to the lovely Cinnamon Isle.

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Regarding the character of the natives of Ceylon, I am unable to give any distinct account, as my residence on the island has been too short to admit of my observing much about them: and being, besides, ignorant of the language, I was unable to hold intercourse with the generality of the people. As far as I can judge from what I have seen myself, and heard from others better acquainted with them, I should say they were a good-humoured, trifling, childish set; indifferent to improvement; and detesting all labour, mental as well as bodily. In some respects, they seem to be superior, and in others inferior, to the natives of India. They are gifted with a happy temper, and a flow of good-humour and cheerfulness, which the Hindoo certainly does not possess: but they have not the powers of application, and steady industry, which the latter has, and which enable the Indian emigrant to beat the Cingalese on his own ground. In point of a sad want of moral principle, a proneness to trickery and intrigue, and a habit of false-speaking, whether with or without any object in view, the Cingalese and Hindoos appear to be pretty much on a par.

Nothing need be said of a voyage from Galle to Bombay, save that it was of five days' duration, and that during that time, no incident occurred, meriting any particular notice.

Bombay, with its beautiful harbour and adjacent islands, has often been described already,

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and therefore I need say nothing regarding it here; especially as it has undergone little change for several years past. The population of the island of Bombay is larger than I should have supposed. The last census taken, has shown it to comprise more than 524,000 souls. The island is altogether about eight miles long, and between two and three miles broad.

I have no intention of remaining in Bombay a day longer than I can help, as the station possesses no attractions for me. I have just heard that a steam frigate is immediately to be despatched up the Persian Gulf; and if I can obtain a passage by her (which is doubtful, as vessels of the Indian navy seldom take passengers), I shall be happy to avail myself of this means of visiting Persia; a country which I am curious to see, and may not have another opportunity of visiting.

A few days after my arrival in Bombay, I went with a party to inspect the celebrated caves of Elephanta. The little island of Gourapoory or Elephanta lies about six miles distant from the Fort; and thither we proceeded in a *bunder* boat, as it is termed, a kind of barge, with a cabin in the after-part, and rowed by a dozen men: being also provided with a sail, to aid the progress, when the wind happens to be favourable.

On the way, we passed by Gibbet Island, so called from the circumstance of certain pirates having, in former years, been there hanged in

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chains—and Butcher Island, which derives its appellation from having been, two centuries ago, the spot where the Europeans of Bombay were wont to perpetrate the awful enormity of slaying cattle—a proceeding which they then could not, with safety, carry into effect, anywhere else. Butcher Island is now used as a residence for invalid soldiers.

Elephanta Island, which is about six miles in circumference, consists of two ridges of hills, covered with jungle. There are a few inhabitants upon the island, a small part of which, is under cultivation. Near the landing-place, there is a small cluster of huts, from whence a steep path, leading up the side of one of the hilly ridges, conducts the visitor to the principal cave. Not far from the landing-place, and near the verge of the sea, there formerly stood a colossal stone elephant, from which piece of sculpture, the island has derived its name. It has now fallen down, and its remains are nearly buried in the sand.

The great cavern-temple of Elephanta has been often drawn and described by travellers. This wonderful subterraneous excavation is wrought in the side of a hill, which rises abruptly from a small space of level ground. It is about 140 feet in length, nearly the same in breadth, and about seventeen feet high. The rock, forming the roof of this cave, has been originally supported by twenty-six columns, arranged in rows—two rows

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of seven columns each, extend from the entrance to the further end; and on the right hand of these, is another row of four columns, while on the left, are two rows, each also comprising four columns.

Many of these pillars have now been broken away by the mouldering hand of time, or by more direct violence; and the chapiters of some are to be seen depending from the roof, while the shaft and pedestal have disappeared entirely. These pillars have not been built or inserted in the cavern, but left standing during the process of excavation.

On either side of the entrance, which is about fifty feet wide, is a figure, supposed to represent a deity. That on the right, possesses eight arms, extended in all directions; while its companion, on the left, is divested of these essential limbs, which have been broken away. Both wear a kind of helmet or mitre on their heads.

Directly opposite to the entrance, and at the further end of the temple, is situated a gigantic bust having three colossal heads, rising from a kind of altar, and reaching from the floor to the roof. The hands, four in number, are held up in front of the triple head; one hand grasping a cobra-capello snake, another holding a fruit of some kind, a third having a lotus flower, and the fourth some nondescript article which I could not make out. The centre head exhibits the countenance in full face, while the other two are

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in profile. Each head wears an elaborately-carved mitre.

Some have supposed this piece of gigantic sculpture to be a representation of the *trimurti*, or Hindoo Trinity — namely, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva—while others have maintained that this triform figure represents Siva alone, to whom the whole temple was dedicated. In more recent times, however, some *savans* have denied to these Hindoo divinities all participation in the worship of Elephanta; holding that this temple-cave was constructed before the Brahminical system of mythology had fully spread its abominations over the land.

On either side of the recess in which the three-headed bust is stationed, is a small crypt or chamber, about ten feet square, in all probability intended for the ministering priests.

On a line with the entrance, and at some little distance on either side of it, are two recesses containing figures of deities; the one on the left, being seated in majesty; and that on the right, apparently going about as a destroyer. Both have been a good deal mutilated.

On both sides of the further portion of the cave, where the great bust stands, are several compartments, containing groups of mythological figures, male and female. Some of these are of colossal size, and others smaller. The carving, which is in bold alto-relief, has been elaborately

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and beautifully executed, but is now, in many places, sadly defaced and mutilated.

Upon the right side of the great cave, there is a smaller shrine, of a similar description, about thirty feet square, and having four entrances, one on each side, with gigantic figures guarding them. In the centre of this, is the phallic emblem. Several other smaller fanes are also connected with the great temple-cave, all containing sculptured groups or single figures, finely executed; but all, more or less damaged.

The Brahmins themselves do not pretend to assign any date to the construction of these singular temples, and the subject has exercised the ingenuity of many of the learned of Europe. I believe there is little doubt that this place was formed for the practice of some system of religion which prevailed, anterior to the full development of Brahminism as it now exists.

These caves are now no longer used as places of worship by any sect of the natives, and are not supposed to retain anything of their original sacred character. Another smaller cave was discovered a few years ago, on a higher part of this range of hills; the entrance to which had long been hidden by an accumulation of earth and *débris*. It contains, I was told, only a few sculptured figures in perfect condition, and the Brahmins of Bombay have obtained leave from Government to appropriate this undefiled shrine, which they have consequently closed up with a strong door.

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I was, upon the whole, much gratified with my visit to this extraordinary place; although I can by no means agree with Dr. Claudius Buchanan, in pronouncing Elephanta to be a more wonderful work than the Pyramids of Egypt.

I could wish that I possessed the power and influence sufficient to dissuade my curiosity-hunting countrymen from that most reprehensible habit of breaking and defacing the wonders of art, which they often come from afar to see. The iconoclastic bigotry of the Moslem conquerors of India, and the not less superstitious zeal of the invading Portuguese, have already done enough, with the aid of fire and iron, in the way of disfiguring the beautiful sculpture of Elephanta: but this consideration is insufficient to deter English visitors from breaking and chipping off such parts, as have escaped the destroying hands of the former. I heard that lately, a party of frolicsome young men had been amusing themselves in practising with rifles and pistols at the eyes and noses of many of the figures—a piece of wickedly wanton mischief for which they deserved to be imprisoned and flogged.

We quitted the island a little before sunset, and it was quite dark when we reached Bombay.

Salsette is connected with the island of Bombay by two causeways: one of which is of recent construction. The original, or Sion Causeway, which is twenty-four feet broad and half a mile in length, was first built between 1798 and 1803,

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and afterwards repaired and enlarged in 1826. It leads from Sion on the north-east corner of Bombay Island; and till within the last six years, afforded the only safe means of communication with Salsette. At Mahim, on the north-west of the island, there was a dangerous ferry, where boats were continually upset and many lives lost, owing to the violence of the tide rushing through the passage. Here the new causeway was erected, through the liberality and benevolence of the lady of the well-known Parsee knight of Bombay, who bestowed a sum of no less than 17,000*l.* for the purpose. The work was commenced in 1843, and finished in 1845. This new causeway is nearly three-quarters of a mile in length, and the top or roadway thirty-two feet in breadth; the whole being constructed of stone.

The old fort of Sion stands on a hill, overlooking the sea; and its summit affords a splendid view of Bombay and the neighbouring isles. A few miles northward of the Sion causeway; in a range of hills which runs across Salsette Island, there are numerous excavated temples of ancient worship—those of Kanhery being the most perfect, and best worthy of inspection. A gradual ascent leads to a hill which is completely perforated with temple-caves, ranged in stories or galleries one above another. These caves are undoubtedly Boodhist; and contain all the characteristics of that religion. Their age is unknown, but they evidently belong to a period

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when Boodhism was universal here, and Brahminism probably unheard of: and there is every reason to suppose them to be much older than the caves of Elephanta, the internal sculptures of which seem to indicate a mixture of the Brahminical with the ancient faith, when Boodhism was gradually yielding to the more recent and more monstrous superstition. By some antiquaries, the caves of Kanhery have been pronounced to be at least 2500 years old, and those of Elephanta probably not more than 1500 years. The term Kanhery signifies "confused sounds," and has been applied, in all likelihood, on account of the echoes of these caverns.

The principal compartment of these excavations, is the *chaitia* or great temple. This is a large chamber, more than eighty feet in length and thirty in breadth, with an arched roof supported by pillars having quadrangular shafts; the whole being surrounded by a gallery, six or seven feet wide, divided off by the pillars. The capitals of these pillars seem to represent elephants confronting one another with uplifted trunks; but the sculpture is much worn, and rather indistinct. Their pedestals have plain square bases with circular cornices. The inner end of this cave is semicircular, and contains a large *dagoba* or bell-shaped mass of solid stone*, about seventeen feet in diameter. In front of this

* In a former chapter on Ceylon, I have made mention of this infallible emblem of Boodhism.

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temple, is a fine vestibule, approached by a flight of steps, on either side of which are high columns cut out of the rock. The walls of this vestibule are sculptured with Boodhist emblems, and in small cells leading off at one side there are several representations of Boodha carved in relief. Three open doorways lead from this porch into an inner hall, immediately in front of the great temple, and which is sculptured somewhat similar to the outer vestibule. At either end of this hall stands a gigantic image of Boodha, in free alto-relief, between twenty and thirty feet in height: standing in attitude of blessing with the right hand, and raising the shawl or scarf with the left.

From this principal range of apartments, flights of winding stairs lead in various directions, to smaller galleries, cells and chambers situated on the face of the rocky hill, on both sides of a deep ravine. Many of these contain sculpture; and it is remarkable that all the human figures possess no more heads and limbs, than Nature has vouchsafed to ordinary mortals; thereby differing from the numerous many-headed and many-handed monstrosities, with which Elephanta abounds; and which are supposed to indicate Brahminical innovation.

With this trifling notice, I shall conclude this chapter. The cave temples of Kanhery have been fully described in detail, by abler pens than mine; and a short visit has not put it in my

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power to say anything regarding them, that has not already been better told by others.

On witnessing the fine remains of ancient grandeur in India, there can be no reasonable doubt of the early civilisation and intellectual eminence of the people of this country. India has, in all probability, been the remote source of all modern civilisation and science. When her magnificent shrines were built or excavated: when Calidas and Valmiki composed her poems and dramas: when philosophy, law, astronomy, numbers, and rhetoric, were cultivated to a surprising extent: she produced the germs of science and civilisation, which in succeeding ages have been matured in far distant lands of the West, among nations who had no existence when her intellectual powers were at their height: while her mighty and perfect language, the Sanskrit, has been the parent of nearly every tongue used by civilised races. But her lustre has passed away. Her degraded children, now sunk in sloth and superstition, scarcely retain even the memory of the past; and till a purer faith and better instruction are, in turn, imparted by their European conquerors, there can be no hope of their again assuming any station in the civilised world.

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PART II.—PERSIA.

CHAP. IX.

Departure from Bombay for Bushire.—Muscat.—Description of the Town and its Inhabitants.—The Arabic Language.

My application for permission to proceed by the war-steamer bound for the Persian Gulf proved successful, through the kindness of the officer commanding the vessel: and two days after a favourable reply to my request, I found myself on board the "Auckland" steam frigate, belonging to the Indian navy; a vessel of 950 tons, teak built, and carrying two sixty-eight pounders and four smaller guns.* She was going up the Gulf, in order to relieve the "Clive" sloop of war, there stationed; and which was to be brought down to Bombay to be refitted.

I must own that I looked forward to visiting Persia, with sensations of undefined gratification and curiosity. For several years past, I had, by way of amusement and occupation, made myself well acquainted with the literature and language

* I embarked, October 10th, 1850.

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of this land of nightingales, roses and poets: and naturally took no small interest in a country, regarding which I had indulged in so many day-dreams. Another incentive to the trip presented itself in the novelty of a sojourn in a country so little visited by my countrymen, whether in pursuit of business or pleasure. There are very few Europeans resident in Persia: and perhaps not more than half-a-dozen Englishmen in the whole country. Tourists and sight-seekers rarely if ever traverse that region. Compared with most other countries of the East, it is remote and difficult of access. What with the potent aid of steam, any London cockney can now transport himself to Turkey, Egypt and Palestine, or to the more distant shores of India and China, with as much ease and safety, as he can take a trip to Paris or Loch Lomond. But with Persia, there is no such facile communication; and the trouble and difficulties to be encountered in finding one's way thither, are too great to admit of that land's being overrun by our restless countrymen, like other more accessible regions. In embracing the present opportunity of visiting this comparatively untrodden ground, I consequently had much pleasure in anticipation.

Before quitting Bombay, I endeavoured to procure any travels in Persia, or accounts of that country, that could be got at a moment's notice; and succeeded in obtaining Morier's and Brydge's Travels, as well as Scott Waring's Tour,

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to serve in some measure, as guide-books. Though I would never suffer myself to be led by the opinions of another, when at variance with my own deliberate conviction; I have found that, when I see another's statement differing widely from my own first impressions, I have at times, been induced to investigate the subject more fully and satisfactorily.

On the sixth day after leaving Bombay, at earliest dawn, we saw the highlands north of Râs-el-hadd (commonly called by English sailors, Rasselgate), the most easterly point of Arabia. When abreast of the Devil's Gap, a fissure in the chain of hills extending along the coast, we gradually approached the land; and in the evening entered the Cove of Muscat, where we were to stop to take in coal. No sooner had the roar of the steamer's cannon announced her arrival, than a boat came off from the town, with the British agent, one Khoja Ezekiel, a Jew; who, having received from our worthy captain certain directions relative to coaling, returned on shore. The hour was so late, that no one on board thought of leaving the vessel till next morning. The stillness of the night was interrupted by the shouting and howling of the watchmen on the fortifications, upon the surrounding rocks; who seemed to exercise their lungs for the purpose of keeping themselves, and every one else, awake. The echo in this cove is certainly very great.

Early in the morning, I went on shore with

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the captain. The Bay or Cove of Muscat, which is shaped like a horse-shoe, is about a mile in length, and half as much in breadth. It is encompassed by high bare rocks, and open only at the entrance. The scenery of this secluded cove is highly picturesque in its sterile wildness. Not a vestige of tree, shrub, or verdure of any kind, is to be seen. The harbour, which is an excellent one, is protected by forts on either side, displaying the Arab blood-red flag: and besides these, small towers, mostly dilapidated, stand on many parts of the rocks. In the harbour lay a French vessel, and a ship of war, belonging to the Prince of Muscat, carrying twenty-eight guns; besides other smaller craft.

Seiyid Saeed the sultan or prince, vulgarly called the *imaum**, of Muscat, rules over a portion of the coast of eastern Africa, as well as this part of Arabia. He is, at present, away at Zanzibar, and one of his sons governs Muscat in his absence. Seiyid Saeed is now about sixty years of age, and bears the reputation of a just and humane prince, much beloved by his people and respected by all others. By all accounts, he must be something very unlike most other Asiatic despots; and I hope the report is true. He possesses twelve ships of war, and sundry merchant

* The term *imaum* properly signifies a spiritual leader in religious matters; and it is a title which, I believe, the Sultan of Muscat has never adopted, though Europeans have thought fit to confer it upon him.

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vessels; and trades with all parts of the East, as far as China and the Mauritius. He holds possession of several of the islands in the Persian Gulf, as well as two or three places on the coast of Persia.

The town of Muscat is situated on a sandy plain, at the further extremity of the cove. It is an ill-built, crowded, not over-clean place, constructed of soft crumbling sandstone and sun-dried bricks. The forts have the appearance of being made of badly-baked piecrust, their exterior being plastered with a powdery yellowish clay. The streets are narrow and dirty; and there are no fine buildings in the town: the best mansion being that of the prince; a large plain three-storied house facing the harbour. The ordinary houses resemble those of Mocha, Suez, and other Arab towns, I have visited. I remarked that many of the wooden door-frames of these houses were beautifully carved in very tasteful arabesque pattern; and looked much out of keeping with the dirty crumbling walls, in which they were inserted. The population of Muscat is said to be about 12,000 souls. The costume of the people is much the same as that of the Arab race elsewhere; but in place of the heavy *abbaya* or thick cloak, universally worn in Syria, they wear a light, thin, fringed mantle, better suited to their hot climate. The women dress in a loose robe and trousers, and their veils resemble those of Egyptian women. I was told that here, the men

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do not usually marry, till they are past twenty; or the women, till seventeen or eighteen years of age — a singular fact if true! and quite at variance with the general precocious custom of the East.

A considerable number of Hindoos reside in Muscat, and many more at Muttra, a town on the coast about three miles off. They are all engaged in trade; and in the quarter where they live, the houses are cleaner and better than the ordinary run of Muscat dwellings. I observed that the exterior walls of these domiciles were decorated with rude fresco paintings of elephants, tigers, and other Indian objects.

The captain and I proceeded, in the first instance, to the house of our Israelite agent, in order to expedite the dispatch of the requisite supply of coals on board; and with some difficulty roused this dilatory functionary from his repose. The fellow's inclination to bestir himself, by no means equalled the captain's wishes. A more indolent, nonchalant rascal, I never met withal— he seemed to consider it quite beneath his dignity to take the slightest trouble; and but for timely assistance afforded by some of the prince's people, we should probably, have got no coals on board, that day. This Hebrew was nominated British agent here, by the Bombay Government, with which he had somehow contrived to ingratiate himself. He is reputed to be wealthy, and is evidently one of those pharisaical gentry who love

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greetings and salutations in the market-place, and to be called of men, Master. I was much surprised to witness the great respect shown him by the Mahomedans of this place; for I had never before seen any son of Islâm exhibit the least civility to one of his degraded race.

As the day advanced, the weather became so hot that I was not sorry to return to the steamer, where the temperature was cooler than in the confined streets of the town. Muscat is one of the hottest places the sun shines on. Being closely encompassed with high rocks, except on one quarter, not a breath of wind reaches it, save when the sea breeze blows from one particular point. In summer, the heat is said to be tremendous, and I can readily believe it.* In addition to being exceedingly hot, Muscat is far from healthy. Malignant fevers are very common; and are probably caused by the exhalations of a swamp situated behind the town. Most of the merchants and others, who pass the day in Muscat, have houses at Muttra where they spend the night; and some persons sleep on board vessels in the harbour.

Some have supposed Muscat, to be the Mosca,

* About four centuries ago, some Persian envoys, sent hither by Shah Rokh, successor of Teimour Lung, described the heat of Muscat as being so intense that the marrow boiled in their bones, and the metal of their swords melted like wax! —a tolerable specimen of Persian hyperbole, but it shows in what estimation the climate of this place was held.

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mentioned by Arrian and Ptolemy; but it is more probably the Cryptus Portus or "hidden harbour" of the latter—the name being descriptive of its retired situation. It was taken by the Portuguese, when their power extended up the Gulf; and on the decline of their empire in the East, the town was retaken by the Arabs, who put to death the whole Portuguese garrison, with the exception of a few individuals, who saved their lives by adopting the Mahomedan faith. In 1746, Nadir Shah sent forces against Muscat, and took the place; but after his assassination, the Persians abandoned it and returned to their own country. A native of Persia, settled here as a trader, who came on board to inspect the steamer, informed me that Nadir's troops stormed Muscat at night, having first resorted to the stratagem of letting loose a number of goats upon the rocks, with lighted faggots fastened to their horns. The Muscattees imagined that the Persians were coming over the hills to attack them, and sallied forth to oppose them; whereupon the town, nearly emptied of its defenders, was easily forced and taken. I have not seen this incident mentioned in any history, and know not how far it may be true. It will be remembered that a like story is recorded of Hannibal, who by a similar contrivance, outwitted Fabius Maximus.

Much traffic is carried on at Muscat. Five per cent. duty is levied on foreign imports; but the Arab traders pay less on goods brought in their

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own vessels. The taxes and duties of the town and adjacent country are all farmed by Hindoo merchants. Manufactures consist chiefly of cotton and silk stuffs, arms, leather, and pottery. A kind of sweetmeat called *halwa*—composed of the starch of wheat, fine sugar, rasped almonds, and clarified butter—is made in large quantities, and exported to different parts of India and Persia, where it is greatly esteemed. The *halwa* of Muscat is, in consistency, a thick glutinous paste, and stored in earthenware saucers. There are few good horses to be got here, but the asses of this part of Arabia are very large and of excellent breed. A fine donkey is a far more expensive animal than the generality of horses.

The slave-trade is now abolished—nominally at least—for I have heard that numbers of slaves are still smuggled into the interior. This was formerly a very important branch of trade at Muscat, and great numbers of blacks were brought from Zanzibar and Abyssinia, and sold here. They were, as they are still, used only as domestic slaves, and treated with great consideration. Kindness to slaves was particularly enjoined by the false prophet of Mecca. Among other injunctions, Mahommed declared that "whoever shall separate a mother from her child, in disposing of slaves, God will separate him from his friends at the day of judgment"—a humane precept, which traffickers in human

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flesh, in more enlightened lands, would do well to observe.

A variety of fruits and vegetables may be procured at Muscat, at all seasons. The gardens lie some ten or twelve miles inland; for at the town itself, there is no appearance of a green blade. Great quantities of fish are caught here; and myriads are visible in the water of the harbour, which is particularly clear and transparent. I saw quantities of a kind of blubber (the Medusa pellucens,) which is luminous at night. This is the "sea-star" which the Peri, in Moore's delightful story, employs to light up the tomb of poor Hinda. Cattle are fed principally on fish, and appear to thrive on this diet remarkably well. We procured some cows here, and the beef proved excellent—better, I think, than any I ever tasted in India. It was, however, an odd sight, to see a cow munching small dried fish like carrots.

In the course of the day, numbers of people came on board the steamer, in order to inspect the novelty: and the captain kindly allowed them to gratify their curiosity *ad libitum*. A strange motley set they were!—Wild-looking, sunburnt Bedouins, from the interior of the country, with their guns and large daggers which they never think of parting with for a moment, came and stared open-mouthed at everything they beheld, apparently scarce believing their own eyes—while sleek ghee-fed Indian banians, in their

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high turbans and long robes of snow-white muslin, paced slowly about, contemplating every object with an air of philosophic indifference. Two grandsons of the Sultan, good-looking little fellows some seven or eight years old, visited us, accompanied by a host of attendants, and comported themselves with perfect gravity and dignity, like little men.

The bazar people brought on board, fruit, vegetables and *halwa* for sale. Many of them could speak a little Hindustanee, and some were able to smatter a few words of English.

The dialect of Arabic spoken at Muscat, differs considerably from that of Egypt. One individual related to me a long story about the wars of the Sultan with the Joassimee pirates and other foes, in the Persian Gulf and on the African coast; but what with his rapid articulation, and, to me, unusual pronunciation, terms and idiom, I could not make out more than half of what he said. The various dialects of the Arabic, in the different countries where that widely-spread language prevails, do not perhaps differ more, than the speech of a Somersetshire clown does from that of a Scottish peasant—but in Great Britain, the lower classes have mostly some education, and are accustomed to read, or hear read, their Bibles, and the newspapers &c.; and consequently understand good English, though they may speak a *patois* among themselves. This is not the case with the Arabs. Educated men are very rare

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among them, and the lower orders never read at all. They therefore understand only that dialect, which they have been accustomed from their infancy to use. The Koran itself is not intelligible to any save the learned few. What a contrast do the Arabs of this day present to their forefathers a thousand years ago! These were then the successors of the Greeks, in science and polite literature; and the depositories of all learning; while Europe was benighted in that long, dark, and barbarous period, that followed the overthrow of the Roman Empire. Now, they are of all ignorant people, perhaps the most ignorant—science has been forgotten among them—literature neglected—and their only notions of learning, consist in the study of endless commentaries on their Koran and religious superstitions; and tedious treatises on the minutiæ of the complicated grammar of their own tongue. Arabian philologists have asserted that their language contains more than twelve millions of words; and that no man, except the inspired prophets, was ever master of it! Indeed nothing short of inspiration could enable the human memory to retain a tenth part of this enormous vocabulary. The greater part of the language is now obsolete and lost.

In the course of the afternoon and evening, the dirty operation of coaling was gone through; and at night we steamed out of the cove of Muscat. Between two and three miles to the

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west of the cove, lies the small bay of Muttra, with the town extending along the shore. Muttra is rather larger and more populous than Muscat, and being more exposed, is cooler and healthier; but the harbour is not so good, and vessels, in consequence, anchor at the latter place.

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CHAP. X.

The Persian Gulf.—Ormus.—Bushire.—Description of the Town and its Inhabitants.—Its Trade and Annual Revenue.

We left Muscat on a Thursday night, and on Saturday morning, we were off Cape Mussendom, the northern point of Oman in Arabia, having passed the Koohi Mubârek (called by English sailors Cape Bombareck) on the opposite coast, at a very early hour. The point of Mussendom is called by the Arabs, Selâma, after a sainted lady, said to be there buried. It is a strange place, full of coves and inlets; and a few small villages lie upon the shore. The people inhabiting this cape, are said to be a peculiar race: they are probably of Hindoo origin, though they now profess *Islâm*.

The straits beween Mussendom and the coast of Persia, have been named the *bâbi iskander* (Gate of Alexander) after "Macedonia's madman;" and this channel is the entrance into the Persian Gulf. Here it is the common practice, in native vessels, to throw overboard a small

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model of a boat made of cocoanut shell, laden with a handful of rice and sweetmeats: —

> "Oblations to the Genii there,
> For gentle skies and breezes fair."

This ceremony, I hardly need say, was not observed by the "Auckland." We passed between Cape Mussendom and the Quoins, as they are called, certain barren rocks; one of which struck me as being remarkably like the Horse of Copinsha in Orkney. At the extreme end of the cape, stands a high rock, a little way out at sea, perforated completely through by a natural passage. Proceeding onwards, there appeared in the distance, the isle of Larack, and still further off, Hormooz or Ormus; once the great emporium of trade and mart of merchandise of India and the west—whose city, once one of the wealthiest places of traffic in the world, has now dwindled away to a few wretched fishing-huts, and a ruined fort, formerly the stronghold of the enterprising Alphonso Albuquerque. The Portuguese once held possession of the islands of Ormus, Larack, Kishm and Bahrein, as well as the ports of Bunderabbas and Congo on the coast of Persia. They lost all these possessions between 1610 and 1625, when the English assisted Shah Abbas in expelling them.

In the early part of the present century, the Gulf was infested with the Joassimee pirates, to the imminent danger of all vessels on these seas.

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The Joassimees are an Arab race inhabiting the southern coast of the Gulf; and they are said to have been formerly a peaceable and industrious tribe of fishermen and traders, till conquered and converted by the Wahaubees*, who directed them to make war on heretics (namely all Mahomedans not of the Wahaubee sect, and all persons of every other creed) and they, in consequence, became pirates. The story can hardly be true — for there is little doubt that they were always pirates, from the earliest ages. At one time they possessed more than sixty large vessels (some carrying as many as 40 guns and 300 men) and more than seven hundred smaller craft. Their piratical navy was manned by not less than 18,000 ruffians. They put to death all who fell into their hands — except individuals belonging to their own religious party—and fought with a degree of ferocity and desperation, worthy of the Berserkars of old Norway. Several expeditions

* The Wahaubees were a sect of Arab fanatics; once very powerful, but now suppressed. Abdul-Wahaub, the founder of this sect, was a Nejdee Arab, who lived in the first quarter of the last century. He endeavoured to restore the Moslem faith to its original purity, by abolishing all unorthodox practices, and rejecting spurious traditions. He was very successful in his efforts; and adopting the true Moslem plan of compulsory conversion, his followers swept over Arabia with sword and fire. The Sultan of Turkey at length determined on the destruction of this Puritan sect; and this measure was, with considerable difficulty, and after much fighting and bloodshed, effected. The last Wahaubee chief was beheaded at Constantinople in 1818.

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were fitted out, against these pirates, by the British Government in India; in some of which undertakings, we were assisted by the Sultan of Muscat. In 1810, the chief piratical stronghold at Ras-el-Kheima, a little to the south-west of Cape Mussendom, was destroyed: and subsequent expeditions have annihilated their power. The Joassimees now employ themselves as sailors and fishermen; but there is no doubt that, but for the fear of our Indian navy before their eyes, they would gladly resume their old predatory and bloodthirsty avocations.

Passing two small isles, called the Tombs, we ran along the coast of the island of Kishm. Many of the rocks upon this shore are singularly formed, and resemble built fortifications. At midnight, the steamer approached Bassadore, at the western extremity of Kishm; and here guns were fired, and rockets sent up, in order to ascertain whether the "Clive" lay at that station. No answer being returned, we held on our course for Bushire. Bassadore consists of a few houses, an hospital, and a depôt of naval stores for the use of the Gulf squadron. The station is very unhealthy, and therefore not much frequented. The entire island of Kishm and a considerable portion of the adjoining coast, are farmed by the Sultan of Muscat from the Shah of Persia.

The coast of Persia presents no view but sterile, barren, and desolate chains of rocks and hills: and the general aspect of the Gulf is dismal and

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forbidding. Moore's charming allusions to Oman's sea, with its

"Banks of pearl and palmy isles,"

are unfortunately quite visionary; for uglier and more unpicturesque scenery I never beheld. On Sunday morning we passed Polior, and at noon were running along the south side of the isle of Keesh, called in our maps Kenn; a fertile and populous island, about seven miles in length. The inhabitants of this, as well as of every other island in the Gulf, are of Arab blood—for every true Persian appears to hate the very sight of the sea.

At night, while off Aboo Sheib; we encountered the brigantine "Tigris," belonging to the Indian navy, on a cruise down the Gulf; and stopped for half an hour, to hold converse with her. Some of her officers came on board the "Auckland," and from them I learned the rather unwelcome intelligence, that at Bushire, which they had left four days previous, the Sheikh or governing head man and all his people were in a state of rebellion against the Shah's government, and that troops were daily expected from Sheerauz, while the inhabitants of Bushire were fleeing in all directions. This posture of affairs, I was apprehensive, might interfere with my travelling in the country.

On Monday morning we were off the Jebel Serai or Barnhill, a high mountain a few miles inland,

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having a long flat top like the roof of a barn. Directly opposite to us, upon the coast, lay the town of Tåheree—once a place of great importance, and now little else than a dirty village. They have a tradition that Alexander the Great fixed two enormous mirrors on the summit of the Barnhill, in which, by some magical contrivance, he could behold ships and armies, lying many hundreds of miles distant!

The weather was calm, and very warm considering the season of the year: the night, however, was always cool and agreeable.

Near Cape Verdistan, there stands a rock, which it is difficult to believe is not a huge castle, built by human hands. The towers, bastions, and terraced summit, are all to be traced with such semblance of reality; that at first, I could scarcely credit that the work was from Nature's hand alone.

On the morning of Tuesday, we came in sight of Bushire; and stopped at some distance, awaiting the coming of the pilot, who conducts vessels into the roadstead. After some delay, this functionary made his appearance; and in a short space of time, the anchor was dropped about three miles off from the town.

The only English vessel lying here, was the "Clive," an eighteen-gun sloop of war, of the Indian navy; which the "Auckland" had come to relieve. There were also, in the harbour, many native vessels.

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Here ended my voyage. To Captain M'D—— my warmest thanks are due; not only for his obliging consent to receive a useless idler, like myself, on board; but also for his kindness during the passage, which greatly enhanced the pleasure and comfort of a short and agreeable trip.

Bushire looks a miserable place. It is true, I saw it under the most disadvantageous circumstances; for in consequence of the revolt of its present ruler, the town was more than half deserted, and all trade and business at a stand: but at the best of times, it can never look otherwise than a poor apology for a great commercial seaport town. Ships of any large size are obliged to lie in the roadstead, three miles from the town, in consequence of the reefs and sandbanks which prevent any but small craft from entering the harbour.

The Commodore commanding the squadron of the Indian navy in the Persian Gulf (at present consisting of three ships) was staying at Bushire when we arrived; and after waiting upon him, I went to pay my respects to the British Resident, commonly termed the *balioos**, an officer of high standing in the Company's army, who kindly invited me to take up my quarters at the Residency, during my stay at Bushire.

* This is a common term in the Turkish and Persian dominions, for a consular functionary. It is not an Oriental word; and I have somewhere heard that it is originally Venetian.

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Abooshehr or Bushire stands at the end of a peninsula (the ancient Mesambria) ten miles or more in length and three in breadth. The extremity upon which the town is built, consists of a crumbling stony formation: and the further portion, joining with the mainland, is low and swampy, being often overflowed by the sea. The town possesses no claim to antiquity. It was originally a small fishing village, and rose to importance during the last two centuries.

With the exception of the Residency, there is not a really good and comfortable house in Bushire. Most of the dwellings are built of a soft friable stone full of shells, like indurated marl; and some of brick, plastered with mud, or imperfectly whitewashed. The habitations of the poorer classes, consist of *kappars* or mere hovels constructed of date-sticks and leaves, covered with mats made of the date-leaf, or of a long bulrush, called *peezur*, which grows in swampy soil. The *kappar* is so small and low, that one cannot stand upright in it, except in the centre; and a family huddled together in such a wretchedly close domicile, can have but little notion of comfort or cleanliness.

The roofs of the larger houses are flat; and many have tall *bâdgeers* or wind-towers rising high above. The *bâdgeer* merits particular description. It is a large square tower, covered on the top, but opening below into the apartment above which it is erected. The four sides are laid open

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in long perpendicular apertures, like narrow windows; and within there are partitions or walls, intersecting each other, so as to form four channels in the tower. By this contrivance, from whatever quarter the wind blows, it is caught in the tower and conveyed into the room below, so that a constant draught of air is kept up, except when it happens to be a dead calm. At this season of the year, people do not think of seating themselves under the bâdgeer, but in the heat of summer, it is a most refreshing, and to many, indispensable comfort.

A considerable number of the houses in Bushire are partly or wholly in ruins, and the entire place wears an aspect of wretchedness and desolation —but much of this unprepossessing appearance is, of course, owing to present circumstances.

The fort, now tenanted by the insurgent Sheikh, lies on the east side of the town; and on the beach, are the custom-house, a large caravansary, and an apology for a quay. The chief mosque of the town is a low shabby mud and brick edifice, which I should never have guessed to be a mosque. The Armenian church, situated near the gate, is a somewhat more respectable building. In the veranda of this church, are buried most of the Europeans who have died at Bushire.

The streets, or rather lanes, of Bushire are narrow, tortuous, irregular, and exceedingly dusty. In one quarter of the town, the graveyard encroaches on the thoroughfare, and many

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of the flat tombstones lie in the way of all passers by. In India, it is considered improper and unlucky to step over a grave—in this country, on the contrary, they plant them in the highway, for people to break their shins over, in hopes of eliciting from the pedestrian, a prayer for the deceased who lies below.

The Residency is situated on an exposed and airy spot, on the south side. It consists of a court surrounded with buildings, including the Resident's mansion and various other lodgings, with outhouses and stables. On the side towards the sea, stands the flagstaff. Besides the British Resident and his family, the medical officer attached to the station has apartments here, and there are also lodgings for strangers like myself. The Resident has a guard of thirty-six Indian sepoys.

The bazar of the town presented a very desolate appearance, nearly all the shops being closed; their owners having fled the place, or concealed themselves in their houses. The only shops open were those of venders of indispensable articles of daily consumption, such as the baker, and the *bakkaul* or grocer who sells vegetables, grain, milk, cheese &c. The exactions levied by the contumacious Sheikh have frightened all the rest away. At present it is difficult to procure supplies of the ordinary necessaries of life, nearly all inland communication being cut off from the town. Cultivation has been much neglected in

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its vicinity, and the few scanty crops raised have been destroyed by marauders. The British Resident had a field of potatoes, about three miles distant, which has been laid waste by the Tungistonee banditti; they, no doubt, thinking the Frankish vegetable a great treat. It is said that they threw the roots away, and boiled and ate the green tops, which I hope they relished.

Bushire has only one gate, lying on the south-east. The gateway is well built, and exhibits some architectural taste. The fortified wall, which encompasses the town except on the side exposed to the sea, is badly constructed, and by no means substantial. It has small towers at intervals, and three or four bastions besides, with a few old honeycombed guns mounted on them. These fortifications were rebuilt by order of the late Shah in 1838, with a view of keeping out the British, at the time when we took possession of Carrack—a needless precaution—for had we thought fit to attack Bushire, we should have assailed it from the sea. They may now serve to keep out the Shah's own troops, which are daily expected. Just in front of the gate, a small breastwork has been thrown up, with embrazures for guns; and six large rusty cannon, mounted on old crazy carriages, are there planted and kept loaded in readiness. Beyond the gate, lies a flat desert of sand, with a clump of date-trees about a mile distant.

The population of Bushire is, or should be,

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about eleven thousand souls; but not one-fifth part of that number, is now within the town. The few who remain here look wretched and impoverished; but the fact is, they all wear their worst clothing and profess to be ruined. The usurping Sheikh is eagerly screwing money out of all who are known to possess anything: and in the event of the town being occupied by the prince's troops, this screwing process will probably be repeated by the new governor. Everybody therefore now apes the *fakeer*, and the substantial merchant makes his appearance in ragged robes and a turban like an old dishclout. The Sheikh's followers swagger about the town, armed to the teeth. Every man of them carries a long gun and sword, with as many pistols and dirks as he can afford to possess.

The inhabitants of Bushire are chiefly of Arab blood, but the generality of them profess the Sheeah faith. Their costume is Persian, but the Arab turban is generally worn in place of the Persian cap of black lambskin. The women generally go veiled in the streets. Some few wear the Persian dark-blue mantle and white veil, but a greater number are attired in the striped or variegated Arab mantle and black veil for the face. This latter is often thrown back over the head, for the sake of coolness, but when any stranger approaches, it is hastily dropped over the face again. There are several Jewish and Armenian families resident in the town. The

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latter are engaged in commerce, and are well disposed towards the English. The people of this town, and indeed of the whole Germseer, as the low country lying along the shores of the Gulf is termed*, are proverbial in Persia for ugliness and stupidity. As regards the latter quality, I cannot venture to give any opinion; but they are certainly a sufficiently ugly set. The children are particularly ill-looking. In most parts of the world, whatever may be the aspect of the parents, children in general wear a cheerful and happy look—but this is not the case here. Such little wizened, squalid, peevish countenances, I think I never saw before.† Drunkenness, I am informed, is a very prevalent vice among all classes; but it is, of course, privately indulged in. The consumption of date-brandy is said to be very great, in proportion to the population.

The cause of the present disturbed state of this place, may be briefly stated. Sheikh Nasser, the chief or governor of Bushire, had not paid up the amount of revenue due to the Persian Govern-

* The entire southern region of Fars, bordering on the Persian Gulf, is called the Germseer or "hot region;" and from Bushire, eastward, as far as Congoon, the tract is named the Dushtistân or "land of plains." The Tungistân, commonly pronounced Tungistoon, or "narrow land," is a small tract of land east of Bushire. The greater proportion of the people of the whole Germseer, consists of an independent lawless set, many of the tribes being robbers by profession.

† The Armenian children are excluded from this unfavourable description. These young Armenians are very fair, and generally good looking.

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ment; and accordingly when he went to Sheerauz, to make his *salâm* to the prince appointed to govern Fars, he was laid hold of, and sent a prisoner to Tehrân, where he is now detained in durance vile. The prince then appointed a person, a son of the *kelauntar* or mayor of Sheerauz, as Governor of Bushire: but in the meantime, Sheikh Hosein, uncle to the deposed Sheikh Nasser, has constituted himself governor in his nephew's room; and utterly refuses to permit any Sherauzee interloper to enter the gate of the town. The Sheikh is of an old Arab family, which for some generations has held ruling sway in Bushire; and he therefore holds his nephew and himself to be far superior to any Persian, and declares that he will yield only to the prince himself in person, but will resist every one else—though at the same time, he disclaims all intention of rebelling against the Shah's authority—a convenient species of lip-loyalty, much akin to that which Dan O'Connell was wont at times to profess. His own personal followers number no more than 300 fighting-men; but he expects immediately to be joined by numerous Arab clans, who all hate the Persian race cordially, and a host of miscellaneous ruffians. The prince has dispatched a force from Sheerauz, to take possession of Bushire, and establish the person nominated as governor of the town. The approach of the troops, is daily and hourly looked for; and meanwhile Sheikh Hosein declares his intention

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of resisting *à l'outrance.* It is doubtful, however, whether his vagabond followers will second his intention. His own Arab retainers will no doubt stand by him, but they are too few for any effectual resistance; and the advance of the regular troops will probably scare many of the others. Most of the inhabitants of Bushire have fled inland, or to Bussora, Carrack or elsewhere: and merchants have sent their effects and families on board buggalas in the harbour, ready for a start, in the event of the town being besieged. Bushire is moreover threatened by the Tungistoonees, a marauding tribe inhabiting the Tungistoon, a small district lying to the eastward, who frequently show themselves and commit depredations. This tribe, which is of pure Persian descent, has generally been at blood-feud with the Arab families of Bushire, and their chief is the deadly enemy of Sheikh Hosein. Yesterday a small band of mounted Tungistoonees appeared within a mile of the gate of the town, whereupon three cannon were discharged at them, and they scampered off.

No English clergyman or missionary resides at Bushire, but on the Sabbath, Divine service is held at the Residency. No means of useful instruction are offered to the people; who are so completely under the control and guidance of their *moollahs* or spiritual pastors, that there is little reason to suppose that they would avail themselves of any instruction at the hands of a

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Christian, if such were held forth to them. The school founded by the well-known Joseph Wolff, at which the Armenian and other Christian youths were taught, has been given up for want of funds, and other causes; but there are some hopes of its being shortly re-established.

The dialect of Persian spoken here, though rather harsh and uncouth, is by no means as unintelligible as some English travellers have represented. I have never experienced any difficulty in understanding the people, or in making myself understood.

Bushire, though a very hot station, is, upon the whole, a decidedly healthy place. The heat in summer is intense; but the bad fevers that at that time prevail so extensively in the interior of Persia, are not common here. Ophthalmia and sore eyes appear, however, to be very general among the poorer classes—nearly as much so as in Lower Egypt: but this must be owing to exposure to hot winds and clouds of dust, as well as to the dirty habits of the people.

The weather is now very pleasant. In the morning and evening, the thermometer stands at 64° out of doors, and about 68° in the house: and at noon it rises to 74°. In the course of another month, the climate will become much colder. The principal rooms in the houses, are furnished with fireplaces, and in January and February, fires are often maintained all day. In the hot months of summer, the English residents leave

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the town, and reside at a place named Chugha-duk, about seventeen miles distant.

The water of Bushire is exceedingly bad. Most of the wells are outside of the town, and though some are dug to a considerable depth, nothing but brackish water has been found. It tastes very like a dose of Epsom salts, and has a similar effect upon strangers. Many of the houses are provided with tanks for the purpose of catching rain as it falls. Water of a better description is brought to town in skins, from a considerable distance, and is used by all who can afford to purchase it. That which we drank at the Residency, and which is very good, is brought from an ancient well situated near the ruins of the old town of Reeshire, about five miles off.

The peninsula, at the extremity of which this town is situated, presents as uninteresting a view, as can be imagined. It consists chiefly of a level waste of sand, with patches of cultivation here and there. A mile or more distant from the gate of the town, is a grove of date-trees, many of which have been destroyed by having had their tops cut off—a piece of mischief executed by the Tungistoonees. Beyond these trees, may be seen, in sundry places, the ruins of small villages, which have been abandoned and destroyed. A quantity of cotton shrubs cover part of the plain, but the crop has been entirely neglected this year. The cotton plant is here a perennial, and

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seems to be very different from that kind which I have commonly seen in India.

The trade of this seaport is very considerable; but at present there is an utter stagnation of all commerce. Provisions are scarce, and nothing is brought into the town from the country. Fish abound in the harbour and roadstead, and are caught daily, wind and weather permitting. The two best kinds are the *halva-mâhee,* called by Europeans the Pomflet fish; and the *biyâh,* a species of mullet. The fowls of Bushire are large and fine; and this breed of poultry has one peculiarity, namely, that the cocks crow at all hours of the night. In my own country, such chanticleers would run imminent risk of having their necks twisted for uplifting their voices at unlucky hours.

The entire annual revenue, including sea-customs, which the Persian Government derives from the port of Bushire, amounts to 22,000 *tomâns,* or nearly 10,000*l.* sterling. Taxation levied on cultivated land, does not depend on the extent or quality of the ground, but upon the number of animals employed by the cultivator in tilling the soil. The demands made on the poor peasant are very severe. He is sometimes compelled to pay taxes on his animals, twice over in the course of the same year; and is besides subjected to all manner of exactions. Date plantations have been assessed at so much yearly per tree; about half a *keroonee* or five pence, or some-

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times more: but no remission is granted when the trees die or are destroyed. Should the number of trees be increased, however, good care is taken to increase the assessment.

Having seen enough of Bushire, I intended proceeding to Sheerauz*, but have been detained for want of means of conveyance. In these unsettled times, caravans from the interior dare not approach Bushire, but deposit their loads at Brazgoon, some forty miles off, and return to Sheerauz direct; being afraid lest their mules should be taken, and their services pressed, by the insurgent party, or by the prince's troops—and in neither case could they entertain the least hope of any remuneration.

* The name of this city has been spelt in English in a great variety of ways. I adopt that which best expresses the proper pronunciation.

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CHAP. XI.

Route from Bushire to Kauzeroon.—Chughaduk.—Brazgoon.—Dâlikee.—Pass of Mullooh.—Persian Caravansary.—Kumaridj.—Arrival at Kauzeroon.

After some little delay, I managed, with the assistance of the Resident, to procure a *chârvadar* or muleteer* with six good mules from Brazgoon—three of these animals being for my servants, and three to carry my baggage. For these, I agreed to pay a *tomân* and a half, per mule, from Bushire to Sheerauz, the *chârvadar* providing their food and other requisites on the road. I purchased a horse for myself, and had fortunately taken the precaution to bring with me, an English saddle and bridle. I had moreover, a Mackintosh air-bed, a most useful travelling companion—a few firearms, and a small canteen. No tent was requisite; as caravansaries were to be found along the road: so that after buying two or three small carpets, a few pots and pans, and a small stock

* The *chârvadar* is the chief muleteer, and generally owner of the animals. He employs a certain number of *kâtirchees* or mule-drivers as his servants or assistants.

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of rice, tea, sugar, biscuits and candles, my viaticum was complete. It was formerly the usual practice of travellers in this country, to adopt the Persian dress; but this, I was advised to avoid doing. An Englishman is respected throughout the land, and is best recognized in his own costume. It is, however, necessary to be particular regarding certain articles of attire. The Persians abominate our round jackets, so commonly worn in India, deeming that these abridged garments involve an indelicate exposure of the person. They also dislike our hats, and clean shaven faces. The best dress for the traveller is a frock coat or shooting jacket; and the Persian cap of black lambskin is a good substitute for a hat. He should also allow his beard to flourish undisturbed, or at least, leave his upper lip unshaven.

A few days before my departure, the insurgent Sheikh Hosein came to call upon the Resident, and I was present at the visit. The Sheikh is an elderly man; but owing to the universal practice of dyeing the beard, does not look more than forty. He was dressed in a plain green cotton vest, and striped turban, with a white Arab mantle, and looked good-tempered and mild: but as Byron has observed, the countenance of a Moslem is rarely, if ever, the index of his true character; and it would puzzle Lavater himself to divine the real nature of many of these dignified and amiable-looking sons of *Islâm.* He was facetious in his conversation, and apparently in

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excellent spirits. This man certainly possesses the virtue of courage, and has great nerve and energy, often put to the test in the course of his career. The greatest blots on his character, are his faithlessness and cruelty, for which he has become notorious, in a country where such peccadilloes are little thought of.

My first stage was to be Chughaduk, whither it was arranged I should proceed early in the morning, remain there during the day, and go on at night. My servants and baggage were despatched thither on the previous evening. Mules are the chief means of conveyance of goods of every description throughout Persia. Each animal is provided with a large pack-saddle; and the boxes, bags, or other articles with which it is loaded, are packed in strong sacks of coarse hair-cloth, called *khoorj*. Many of the mules have bells suspended to their collars, keeping up a perpetual tinkling, which, on a dark night, often proves useful.

At the first blink of daylight, on the 11th of November, I left Bushire, accompanied by one of the Resident's servants, mounted, who was to guide me to Chughaduk. Our route was rather circuitous, in order to avoid the worst parts of the *masheela*, or salt swamp, occupying the other extremity of the peninsula. The plain was quite level, and the atmosphere so clear, that, after proceeding some distance, when the sun had risen, the houses of Chughaduk were visible; and though

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about fourteen miles off, appeared to be within half an hour's ride. A huge wall of mountains separates the Germseer, or low region, from the Serdseer*, or high table-land of Persia. One of the most conspicuous of these, is an abrupt lofty hill, named Hormooj; where, as my guide informed me, some specimens of coal—he called it "stone-charcoal"—had lately been found; but an attempt to procure a supply of this useful mineral had, it seems, proved unsuccessful. This mountain is marked in our maps, Haleela Hill, as from the sea it looms over Cape Haleela, though it is, in reality, many miles distant. According to my guide's account, there also existed in this mountain some springs of *moomiyai*,—a kind of petroleum, which the Persians believe to possess great medicinal virtues, and to be highly efficacious in mending broken bones.

The *masheela* was nearly dry when we crossed it, and patches of salt dotted the ground. The country continued to present a level plain of sand, with a few clumps of date-trees here and there, and occasionally a solitary tamarisk. In many places, the soil was covered with a thick, strong, thorny grass, called *khâri-shootur*, or "camel's thorn," and a small salsuginous plant, named *gittek*. On this plain there is often plenty of

* The name *serdseer* signifies "cold region." It is also termed the *sarhadd*, a word literally signifying "boundary or frontier," but generally applied to any high land where the climate is cold.

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game, in the shape of antelope and bustard. Hyenas, foxes, and jackals, are said to be numerous, but these are seldom seen in daylight. I saw great numbers of that pretty little creature, the Jerboa, which the Persians name the "two-legged mouse." This animal, which some suppose to be the coney of Scripture, resembles a kangaroo in miniature. It is about the size of a large rat; it sits or stands upright on its hind legs, and feeds itself with its fore-paws like a squirrel. The hind legs are very long, enabling it to leap to a great distance; and its colour is light-brown on the back, and white on the belly. It lives in holes like a rabbit. Some of the poorer classes of people eat the jerboa, though it is certainly unclean food to a Moslem.

At Chughaduk there are three small houses, belonging to the English at Bushire: I put up in that of the Resident. These houses are at some distance from each other: a few date trees stand near them, and all around is a dreary waste of sand. There are no native habitations, excepting two or three huts near the Resident's house. In the close, hot weather of summer, when not a breath of air is felt at Bushire, and the heat is insupportable; there is always a hot blast blowing here; which, by fortifying the houses with wetted tatties, in the Indian fashion, is converted into a cool and agreeable draught. In the course of the forenoon, a long string of horses, destined to be shipped from Bushire for the Indian market,

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passed by this place, conducted by a merchant of Sheerauz. Of the horses sold in India, under the name of Arabs, not one in five hundred ever saw the sands of Arabia. They are all, with few exceptions, reared in valleys in the neighbourhood of Tehrân and Kermanshah, and shipped from Bushire or other ports. The value of horses imported annually from the Persian Gulf to Bombay, has been reckoned at not less than 40,000*l*. A few are shipped from Baghdad, Bussora, and Bahrein, but by far the greater number from Bushire. They are packed closely together on board the native vessels, and remain standing in one position during the whole voyage, which may be of two or three months' duration, never being allowed to lie down. They do not, however, appear to suffer from the confinement, want of room, or motion of the vessel.

The Persians do not cut their horses' tails, but tie them up in a knot. The manes and tails of white horses are often dyed a deep orange colour with *henna*. In the spring and early part of summer, horses are put on grass: and at other times, they are fed on barley mixed with chopped straw. In the stable, their heels are generally confined with ropes, as in India: and they are kept very warmly clothed.

At eight in the evening, we quitted Chughaduk for Brazgoon, distant eight *farsakhs**, or about

* The *farsakh* or *farsung* is the "parasang" of the old Greek historians. It is properly about 3¾ miles; but may ordinarily

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thirty miles. The night was cool, and scarce a breath of wind swept over the plain; while our caravan proceeded along slowly and silently: the only sound that reached the ear, being the tinkling of the mules' bells. Two farsakhs distant from Chughaduk, we passed Ahmedee, once a fine village, and now utterly deserted, having been destroyed in the endless skirmishes between the Tungistoonees and the Sheikh of Bushire. The ruins of a small fortalice alone remained to mark its situation. We reached Brazgoon about an hour before sunrise; and there being no caravansary at that place, I was conducted to the house of one Reihan, a Jew, and was accommodated in a small room adjoining the stable. My lodging was neither particularly clean nor comfortable; but I was tired and sleepy, and as soon as my carpets and bed were spread on the floor, I lay down and in less than two minutes was in a sound slumber. Here we remained during the day.

Brazgoon, or more correctly Burazjân*, is a

be reckoned at any distance between 3½ and 4 miles. The following are the Persian measures of length:—

Bahr—The length of one joint of the thumb, or about 1¼ inch.

2 *bahr* = 1 *girih*—about 2½ inches.

16 *girih* = 1 *zera* or *gaz*—40 inches.

Kadam—a short pace of 20 inches.

12000 *kadam*, or 6000 *gaz* = 1 *farsakh*.

* In Southern Persia, a long "â," coming before the letters "m" or "n," is commonly sounded "oo." Thus *Eerân*,

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large straggling village, containing about 1500 houses, built chiefly of unburnt bricks and mud, with flat roofs. On one side of the village, is a fort. The bazar is a wretched place, and the people looked squalid and miserable. A good deal of wheat and barley grows about here, and abundance of date trees. I also observed numbers of the lote or cornel tree. This village is at a considerable distance from the mountains, though owing to the purity of the atmosphere, they appear close at hand. The day was very hot, and my confined apartment far from comfortable. The chief merchant in this place, a man well known to the Resident at Bushire, called upon me, and offered me lodgings in his house; but it was scarce worth my while to accept his invitation, as our party was to resume the journey after midnight.

At four in the morning we quitted Brazgoon. As the road approaches the hills, it becomes more stony and uneven. The tamarisk grows in the low and swampy places; and upon the high stony ground, are the *kharg* or great swallow-wort (known in India by the names of *auk* and *madâr*) and the *koonar* or lote-tree.* Game is said to be plentiful hereabouts, but I saw no four-footed

shâm, *nân*, become *Eeroon*, *shoom*, *noon*, &c. Men of letters call this pronunciation a vulgarism; but it is nevertheless universal among all classes of people, high and low.

* This is a thorny shrub bearing a small fruit, common all over the East. In Egypt it is called *nebk*, in Syria *sidra*, and in India *bair*.

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animal, except a huge lizard, called the *boozdoosh* or "goat-milker," from some questionable story regarding its propensity to suck she-goats while asleep: and the only birds I saw on the road, were the common sparrow, and a large crested lark named the *choghool.* As we approached Dâlikee, we passed three or four inconsiderable streams, so thoroughly impregnated with naphtha, that the water was of a greenish hue, and emitted so nauseous a smell, that I had some difficulty in persuading my horse to cross the first we encountered. On the banks of one of the larger streams, were some watermills in the form of round towers; and here we met a party of men, returning from the mills, with their asses laden with sacks of ground corn. Every man carried his long gun, and wore a sword or dagger—a bad sign of the state of the country! Near Dâlikee, I inspected a naphtha well, hard by the roadside—a black pit, about twelve feet in diameter; filled with liquid bitumen exhaling an abominable odour. These founts of naphtha are numerous here; and the substance itself is sent to all parts of the country, where it is used for a variety of purposes.

Dâlikee is about fourteen miles from our last stage. It is a poor village, constructed of rough stones cemented with mud; and surrounded with date trees. The fort attached to it, is entirely in ruins. On one side of the plain where it stands, extends the great mountainous chain; and on

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the other, at a little distance, lies a very extensive grove of date trees, stretching out for some miles. The dates of this place are said to be the best in Persia. I proceeded direct to the caravansary, on one side of the village, where I took up my abode. The building is rather old, and somewhat dilapidated and dirty; but I was thankful for the shelter it afforded, as my morning's ride had inspired me with a tolerably keen appetite for breakfast.

The provisions commonly kept for sale to travellers, consist of bread baked in large round cakes, nearly as thin as paper—*maust* or curdled milk, a very refreshing dish after a dusty and fatiguing ride — acid cheese, like our cream cheese at home — and fruit, of which, dates and watermelons form the principal part. From a selection of the above articles, with the addition of a few eggs and a cup of tea, I made a hearty breakfast, which was scarcely finished, when some of the village people came to pester me for medical advice and physic. Every Frank travelling in the East is, as a matter of course, dubbed a "medecin malgré lui;" and as I have had this dignity conferred on me pretty frequently, I took the precaution of procuring at Bombay some boxes of Holloway's Pills, a quack medicine of the universal panacea school, which if it does no good, is not likely to work much harm. To each invalid, I gravely administered six pills to be swallowed immediately; which was done without

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hesitation—indeed I believe they would each have taken on the spot, the entire contents of a box, had I recommended it.

Having acquitted myself of these medical duties, I went out to view the place, which one of my patients volunteered to show me, and proceeded, in the first place, to inspect the ruined fortress. In this fort, about eighteen years ago, Abdur-Rasool, the brother of the present rebel Sheikh of Bushire, was murdered by a party of the Brazgoon people. He had long been at feud with the Brazgoonees, and had, a short time previously, killed their chief by treachery. For this, they vowed vengeance—a threat which he thought fit to despise. On this occasion, he was returning with a band of Persian followers, from Sheerauz, where he had been on a visit to the governor: and when approaching Dâlikee, was warned of his danger, and advised to push on direct to Bushire: but he disregarded the friendly warning, and halted for the night, in the fort here. Presently the fort was beset by a company of armed Brazgoonees. They called out to the followers of Abdur-Rasool, declaring that they had no wish to injure them; and offering them *bakht* or free quarter, if they would leave their master and depart in peace.

This offer, the vile rascals, who were quite as numerous and as well armed as the Brazgoonees, accepted at once; and marched away from the fort, abandoning their lord to his fate. Abdur-

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Rasool, now deserted by all, took up his position in a small narrow tower, in order to sell his life as dearly as he could. Here he was, in a great measure, sheltered from bullets, while the entrance and stairs of the turret were so small, that he could not be attacked by many at once. After he had shot and cut down some seven or eight of his assailants, the tower was set fire to—he was obliged to quit it—and was immediately slaughtered. His body was then burnt to ashes, and scattered to the winds. He was, by all accounts, a man of great courage and energy: and, like his brother, endowed with a full share of ferocity and cunning.

The behaviour of this man's followers, exhibits a very bad, and I believe very general, trait in the Persian character. In this particular, the people of this nation, are far beneath their neighbours. A Turk will fight for his master, from a sense of duty—an Arab is, in this respect, as clannish as a Scottish highlander—and even the effeminate Hindoo will often display a degree of devotion, that might do honour to better men. A Persian possesses none of the noble feeling which prompts this conduct. Though born in his master's house, and nourished by him all his life; he will desert him without hesitation or compunction, in the hour of danger. This cannot be owing to sheer cowardice; for the same man will fight bravely enough, when his own interests require him to do so—but to a total absence of

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every generous and manly sentiment; consequent on the atmosphere of demoralisation, he has breathed from his infancy, and the state of thorough and engrossing selfishness, in which he has been brought up. He has no idea of attachment to any person or thing, excepting himself and his own interest; and is rarely, if ever, impressed with the slightest feeling of loyalty, gratitude or sympathy.*

On my return, in the afternoon, to the caravansary, I found that my morning's practice, had conveyed to the good people of Dâlikee, a high idea of my medical skill; and I could hardly get rid of them, when my servants had got my dinner ready. This teaches me to be more sparing of my pills in future. An Æsculapian reputation, however honourable, is apt to be somewhat troublesome in this "advice gratis" community.

After dinner, three women honoured me with a visit, soliciting advice. They all complained of not being blessed with any family, for certain very satisfactory reasons, which they unfolded at length, in the plainest and broadest terms. Nor were they deterred from speaking thus freely, by the presence of several of the male sex, who crowded into my cell, bound on similar errands, to obtain relief from real or imaginary complaints.

* From this censure, the Eeliauts or wandering tribes, must be exempted; as they are warmly devoted to their chiefs and friends. These tribes are, for the most part, of Koordish, Turkish, or Arab extraction.

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One young man, in his turn, quite unabashed by the presence of females, communicated a detail of a weakness, which he laboured under, and which in more civilised societies, a man would be studious to keep concealed.

They were all much disappointed at my declaring my inability to cure them on the spot, as they had evidently expected to be set to rights in a twinkling. There was one very sickly and cadaverous looking personage, who came to beg for pills, whom I found on inquiry, to be a clay-eater. In certain parts of the country, a kind of reddish clay, having a sweet and slightly acid taste, is found; and this, some imprudent persons become passionately fond of eating. The practice is a most pernicious one: the clay-eater invariably becoming emaciated and sickly: but when the habit has once been formed, it is very difficult to relinquish it; and some kill themselves by it. The famous Hojaj Ibn Yoosuff, one of the most renowned of the Moslem conquerors of this country, died of this noxious habit of eating clay. It is singular that this custom prevails in some parts of the United States of America, and the same kind of clay is to be found there. When I was in that country, I heard of the habit of clay-eating as being practised in Georgia and the Carolinas; and little expected to find a similar custom in vogue, in this remote quarter of the globe.

By way of further testing my medical skill, or

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patience, a number of ailing children were next brought; but these I positively refused to have anything to do with. The universal pill of Holloway could do little harm to grown folks, but for aught I knew, it might suffice to poison an infant. The Persians are surprised at our small doses of medicine; for their own physicians administer their drugs in large bowlsfull.

In the mountains near Dâlikee, are found the *pâzun*, a very large wild goat, and the *boozi koohee* or ibex. One of the latter, which had been shot on the previous evening, was brought me—by way of a fee, as I suppose; but I rewarded the bearer with some English gunpowder.

Our next stage was Koonar Tukhteh, four farsakhs and a half from Dâlikee, which latter place we left at four in the morning. After proceeding about a mile and a half, we entered a gap in the mountains, and here commenced the tedious and rugged route, ascending from the low country, to the table land of the interior. The pass was narrow and uneven, and the surrounding scenery, bare and wild. My horse was evidently unused to these mountain paths, and stumbled so frequently, that I was glad to accept the *chârvadar's* offer of his more sure-footed mule, and consign my steed to be led by the bridle.

This pass led to a valley, through which the Dâlikee river flows; and pursuing our course along the valley, we crossed and recrossed the

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river five times. It is a large stream, in some places fully eighty yards in breadth; and in rainy weather, is often impassable for several days together; though now, the water was not more than knee deep, at the fording places. The water is slightly brackish to the taste, but does not seem to be impregnated with bitumen, like the other streams near Dâlikee. At the third crossing, over a place where the river is narrower and deeper than usual, I saw the remains of a bridge; and the *chârvadar* told me that some years ago, a merchant who had made his fortune in India, bestowed a large sum for the erection of a bridge at this spot, for the benefit of all traders and travellers; as a piece of *suwâb* or religious merit. The money devoted to the purpose, was lodged in the hands of the governor of this part of the country; and this upright ruler, according to the usual Persian custom on such occasions, conveyed four-fifths of the sum into his own pocket, and with the remainder, ran up a miserable flimsy bridge, which the first floods carried clean away—the abutments, and a single dilapidated arch, are all that remain of it. This may be taken as a fair specimen of the high honourable principle entertained by Persian nobility; and of the great encouragement afforded to works of benevolence and utility, in the land of Eerân!

Near the last crossing, are the remains of an older and larger bridge, which led across a broad

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part of the river; and consisted of thirteen arches. It was in good order, fifteen years ago; but as nobody would spend a single *shahee** in keeping it in repair, it has been allowed to fall into ruins. Leaving the banks of the river, the road became more steep, rugged and difficult, as we advanced into the hills. It was astonishing how the heavily laden mules kept their footing, when scrambling from one platform of rock to another. They appeared to step as securely and confidently as an Alpine chamois, over places where a man would find it hard enough to walk without any burthen; and seemed to take particular care, in picking their way, to avoid bringing their loads (consisting of large trunks and sacks, projecting a long way on either side) in contact with the surrounding rocks. Persian mules are very powerful animals. One will carry a load of three hundredweight, over a mountain pass, which we would

* A *shahee* is about a halfpenny. The following will explain the current money of Persia:—

Deenar—a nominal coin, in which accounts are reckoned; it is in value, not quite the 20th part of an English farthing.

5 *deenars* = 1 *ghauz*—also nominal.

10 *ghauz* = 1 *shahee*—now nominal; it is in value one halfpenny sterling.

Pooli siyâh, or "black money"—a copper coin, in value one-third of a *shahee*.

20 *shahees* or 1000 *deenars* = 1 *sahebi keraun* or *keroonee*, sometimes called a *riyâl*—a silver coin value 10 pence.

Pendhbâdee—a silver coin worth rather less than half of a *keroonee*.

10 *keroonees* or 10000 *deenars* = 1 *tomân*—a gold coin.

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suppose an unladen beast could scarcely travel: and when going short distances, upon level ground, they will carry a much heavier weight. They are expensive animals—a good baggage mule costing forty or fifty tomâns. A camel is much cheaper, and may be got for twenty or thirty tomâns; but though he can lift a heavier load than a mule, he is not so useful upon these rough roads; his proper ground being a level plain of soft sand. Persian donkies are also excellent of their kind. There is one description of ass, of very large size, used only for riding, which will sometimes sell for as much as seventy or eighty tomâns.

I cannot but consider the mule, a much calumniated and undervalued animal, among people who know not his real worth and merits. He is proverbial for obstinacy and stupidity; but having had some experience in his nature and ways, I must pronounce him to be, in my opinion, a far more intelligent, docile and useful animal, than a horse. As for his obstinacy, I believe he rarely exhibits this, without good cause for so doing; and then he is certainly stubborn enough. His courage, instinct, and steady perseverance merit all praise. I have been told that there are not less than 2500 mules continually employed on this route, conveying goods and passengers between Bushire and Sheerauz.

We now began to ascend the *kotul* or pass of Mullooh, leading up the side of a steep rock: the

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narrow pathway being in many places, nearly choaked with huge boulders and masses of stone, which had fallen from the superincumbent rock. The surrounding hills were of drab-coloured limestone, bare, sterile and wild. A few hardy plants appeared here and there, where their roots could find a scanty nourishment. Among these, were the *koonar* or lote—the *tengiz*, a shrub resembling hawthorn—and the *bárisheen*, a plant I had never seen before. It somewhat resembles the common euphorbium or milk-hedge of India; but bears a small fruit, like an almond in shape, the kernel of which is eaten.

At the summit of the pass, appeared a small Rahdar-khoneh or guardhouse—a mere shed constructed of stones and sticks. From hence we entered on the extensive plain of Khisht, in the middle of which lies the village of Koonar Tukhteh. Large herds of cattle and sheep were grazing on the plain, which affords rather coarse pasturage, consisting of the camel-thorn and other prickly plants. The village of Koonar Tukhteh is a small poverty-stricken place, with a date plantation beside it. The cottages have thatched roofs with gable ends, instead of the more common flat roof. The caravansary, which is a tolerably good one, stands at some little distance from the village; and I took up my quarters in the *balakhoneh* or upper room, consisting of a Gothic arch, open at both ends, and having a small apartment on either side, without doors.

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A Persian caravansary consists of a large courtyard surrounded by rooms, or rather cells, elevated upon a ledge, a few feet high; and built in the form of Gothic or Saracenic arches, having small doorways in front, without any door. Behind these cells lie the stables, long dark vaults like cloisters. A flat-terraced roof leads round, above these cells and stables; but the courtyard is open to the sky. There is generally a *balakhoneh* or upper room, above the gateway by which the court is entered; and a *serdaub* or subterraneous cellar, where people go in the daytime during the hot weather of summer, lying beneath the court, several feet under ground. In the centre of the court, there is usually a *sukkoo* or built platform a few feet high, where they sit in the cool weather; and on one side of this, a flight of steps leads down to the *serdaub*. When the caravan has arrived, the horses and mules are tethered in the court, while the travellers take possession of the cells, spread their carpets and beds on the floors, hang up a curtain at the doorway, and make themselves as comfortable as circumstances will admit of. There is always a person who sells provisions and forage, for man and beast: and the caravansary is superintended by a *dâlandar* or "entrance-keeper" who closes its heavy gates at night, and opens them when required.

The plain of Khisht is many miles in extent, and contains numerous villages, each imbedded

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in a clump of date trees. Near the caravansary were two or three *hashms* or hamlets, of a kind which can be constructed or pulled down in a few hours. The *hashm* consists of a number of huts made of date-sticks and mats, such as I described at Bushire, surrounded by a *khârbust* or high fence of thorny shrubs, cut and piled thickly round. Many of the villages in the Germseer are constructed in this way; but huts of this description are, I am told, never to be seen to the northward; where the snow and severe cold of winter, require that dwellings should be built of more durable materials.

The water of this place is very bad—drinkable water is brought from a spring at the foot of the hills, nearly four miles distant.

During the day, I saw many whirlwinds or sandspouts skimming over the plain. They were similar to what I have witnessed on the Lybian desert, but on a much smaller scale.

I attempted to sleep at night, in the *balakhoneh*, but the cold drove me thence, to seek one of the cells below. The weather here was much colder than in the low country. The herdsmen and peasants wore a sort of pea jacket, called a *kapanek*, made of drab-coloured felt stuff, fully half an inch thick, with short sleeves and no cape or collar. The felt of which this garment is made, is not woven, but the wool is cut small, wetted, mixed with soap, and then kneaded and beaten into a consistency. The *kapanek* is not sewed,

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but wrought entire upon a mould. It is very warm, and will throw off the heaviest rain. One of these jackets costs something less than a to-mân, and will last a man many years.

The peasants all carry large knobbed sticks, sometimes having a *shishper* or knob of iron with six wings or projections, on the top. I observe that most of the young men shave or cut the beard, leaving the mustachios long; while the elder persons allow the beard to grow to its full size.

Next morning we started at nine o'clock. Before setting out, the people breakfasted on a hot mess of *haleem*, a pottage of wheat and chopped meat; with hard-boiled eggs and dates. No coffee made its appearance: the Persians do not seem to care for this indispensable refreshment of an Arab. The *kaleon* or pipe for smoking through water, having passed from hand to hand, all were in readiness for the road. My party had been augmented by the addition of several others, who joined us for company's sake. A march of three or four miles, brought our caravan to a defile in the mountains, which led to the Khisht or Shapoor river, a narrower but more rapid stream than that we had crossed the day before. On the banks, I noticed a quantity of a species of oleander or rhododaphne, some of the flowers of which were in full blow. It is called *khar-zahra* or "donkey's gall."

Advancing along a very uneven and stony path, we commenced the ascent of the Kotuli Kumâridj,

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the second stage of the mountain route. This pass is even wilder and more gloomily grand than that of Mullooh. It leads along the side of a huge deep ravine; the cliffs, on either side of the gulf, bearing the appearance of having been rent asunder by some mighty convulsion. At the bottom of the deep fissure, runs a small brook. In some places, the pass is by no means very safe: the path winding along the perpendicular face of the limestone rock, is here and there extremely narrow; and a single false step would precipitate the traveller down a dreadful chasm. Small parapet walls were built some years ago, at the dangerous places; but many of these have disappeared. The worst part of the ascent, is called the *kummer* or "ledge" of Azâd Khan*—and a wilder spot it would be difficult to conceive. At the top of the *kotul*, was the usual small guard-house, and from thence, a slight descent leads to the plain of Kumâridj, on one side of which is the village of that name. This plain is not

* This spot has been named after Azâd Khan, a chief in Nadir Shah's army, who, after Nadir's death, made a bold push for the throne of Persia. He was defeated, and his army destroyed, in this perilous place, by the forces of Kureem Khan, the successful candidate for the crown, aided by the mountaineers of Khisht. Azâd Khan fled to Baghdad, and afterwards returned and threw himself on the mercy of Kureem Khan, now acknowledged Sovereign of Persia; who, with a degree of generosity and clemency for which he was eminently distinguished, forgave his old opponent, and made him his friend and counsellor.

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nearly as extensive as that of Khisht, and is bounded by hills. The distance we had come, was not more than twelve miles; but the incessant scramble upwards, rendered it a rather fatiguing march. I had walked on foot, the whole way.

The village of Kumâridj is well built and substantial. Most of the houses are erected of hewn stone. The caravansary, I found to be a small dirty place; and I consequently preferred lodging in the house of the *kedkhoda* or head man of the village, a very comfortable two-storied mansion, with a terrace roof. There are several towers at the corners of the village, built of white limestone; and nearly every house, has a certain number of date trees growing beside it.

We resumed our journey, next morning, three hours after midnight; and while it was quite dark, entered the Tengi Toorkân, a narrow and crooked defile; with little, if any, ascent. In some parts, this pass is very narrow, and the ground much encumbered with huge boulders, which have rolled into it from the hills on either side. About an hour before daybreak, I witnessed a splendid meteor, which shot across the heavens, emitting an intensely brilliant light, that for a few moments illumed the whole scene; and then burst into innumerable small luminous fragments, which continued visible for several minutes after. The air was very cold, and I occasionally dismounted and walked, to keep myself warm.

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Most travellers in this country, have noticed the frequent phenomenon of the false dawn*; but this is of too common occurrence in India, to attract the notice of any one coming from that country.

The gray of morning just preceding daybreak, is called by the Persians *havá,e goorg u meesh* (time of the wolf and sheep) as at that time, a man is supposed to be able to see these animals on the road before him, but would be unable to distinguish the one from the other. The phrase is very similar to the French "entre chien et loup."

Passing a guardhouse at the end of the Tengi Toorkân, we entered the plain of Kauzeroon; and a little after sunrise, reached the remains of the ancient town of Direez, where there is a small village constructed of the old ruins. The road-side was covered with masses of ruins; and on the right hand, I observed a rudely-sculptured stone lion. Direez is six miles from the town of Kauzeroon. A great part of the plain, lying between, is planted with tobacco of a coarse kind, called *khooshka*, of which, great quantities are annually sent from Bushire, to Arabia, Egypt and Turkey, where it is sold under the name of Sheerauz tobacco, though of a very inferior qua-

* The *soobhi kâzib*, or false dawn, is a transient appearance of light on the horizon, which often appears about an hour before the *soobhi sâdik*, or real dawn of day.

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lity to the latter. It is very cheap, and costs, at Kauzeroon, about a *keroonee* (tenpence) for a *man* of seven pounds.*

Several forts and towers were visible in the plain, which is bounded on two sides by chains of hills; and is narrow in proportion to its length, which must be nearly twenty miles. As the day advanced, the sun waxed very hot; and I was not sorry to reach Kauzeroon and shelter myself in a small dirty caravansary. Kauzeroon has been a large and populous town; but the greater part of it is now in ruins. The houses are mostly built of limestone, and date trees abound. The present population is rather larger than that of Bushire; yet the place looks dismal and deserted. The *máliyát* or annual revenue of this town and all the lands attached to it, amounts to 18,000 tomâns. The people here are much fairer, and better looking, than the inhabitants of the low country. Some of the young boys I saw, were little, if at all, darker than English children.

* Persian weights are:—

Nokhood—a kind of vetch, called in India "Bengal gram."
24 *nokhood* = 1 *miscal*—about $\frac{1}{6}$th of an ounce.
90 *miscals* = 1 *vakka*— nearly a pound avoirdupoise.
8 *vakkas* or 720 *miscals* = 1 *man* of Tabreez—In different places varying from 7 to 7½ pounds.
2 Tabreez *mans* = 1 *mani shahee* or Royal *man*.
100 Tabreez *mans* = 1 *kharwár* or ass-load—725 pounds.

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CHAP. XII.

Kauzeroon.—Ruins of Shapoor.—The Eeliautees. —Kotuli Dokhter.—Deshti Burr.—Arrival at Sheerauz.

NEXT morning, at an early hour, I set off to visit the famous remains and sculptures of Shapoor: three farsakhs and a half distant from Kauzeroon. I had hired a horse, in order to give my own a day's rest; and took a guide with me. Formerly, a guard of armed men was necessary, on account of the Mamasenni robbers, many of whom lurked about Shapoor: but since the dispersion of these banditti, no protection is required. I retraced yesterday's route as far as Direez, and then turned in a north-westerly direction. Having passed through a jungle of *koonar*, I came to an extensive grove of myrtle, perfuming the air. I thought it had been planted, but my guide informed me that the shrub grew spontaneously, and was common in these parts. I now came upon the plain of Shapoor, which is much intersected by watercourses (rather troublesome to cross), and is well cultivated with rice and barley. I saw several persons engaged in ploughing, and

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tilling the land. The Persian plough is drawn by a pair of bullocks, and is much the same as that used throughout the East; but rather larger and more substantial than the Indian. The spade used here is a very large and weighty implement, with a broad iron head, fixed on a thick handle, six feet long.

At some distance, on the skirts of the plain, were numerous black tents, inhabited by the Eeliauts or wandering tribes. On one side, lies the Shapoor valley, which I had come to inspect; and in front of which once stood the city, the capital of the ancient Sassanian kings — nothing now remaining of it, save heaps of ruins, nearly buried in a jungle of brushwood. The city of Shapoor was built by the monarch whose name it bore—the Sapores of Greek and Roman historians. It is recorded that the first city on this spot, was erected by Tahmuras, the third king of Persia, at a very indefinite period of antiquity. This was destroyed by Alexander the Great; and afterwards rebuilt by Shapoor, about A.D. 260, who made it his capital, and gave it his own name. The period of its final destruction is doubtful; but probably soon followed the Mahomedan conquest.

The valley of Shapoor lies between two high chains of rocky hills, and a small river flows through it, bordered with willows, tamarisks, and other shrubs. The entrance, which is the narrowest part, has on its right hand or east side,

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a hill which bears the remains of ancient fortifications, walls and towers. Morier states the valley to be thirty yards broad at the entrance; but he must mean a hundred and thirty; for the river alone must be full thirty yards in width, and the banks extend to a considerable distance, on both sides. Upon the rocky sides of the valley, are the celebrated sculptures, cut in relief. There are six tablets or groups — two upon the right hand as one enters the valley — and four upon the opposite side. Going along on the right hand side for a little distance, I came to the first tablet, which is much defaced. It has represented two gigantic horsemen, with other figures on foot; but the design cannot now be accurately traced. Of the horses, little more than the legs remain; and under their feet lies a dead warrior, whose figure is still in tolerable preservation, and of colossal dimensions. The figures in this tablet must have been on the same scale as the dead man, who is upwards of sixteen feet in length.

The rock on which this tablet is cut, forms part of the mountain on which are the remains of fortifications; and a little further on, on the side of the same mountain, is the second tablet, the finest and most perfect of all. This tablet is divided in three compartments, and its entire length is about twenty-two feet. The centre and principal compartment, which is twelve feet long, represents a monarch on horseback with his attendants on foot; and before him, kneels a figure clad

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in Roman costume. This has generally been considered (and probably with correctness) a representation of the triumph of King Shapoor over the unfortunate emperor Valerian. Shapoor is attired in a long robe reaching to the feet, and upon his head is a crown surmounted by a globe, like a large football. His hair is long, thick and curled, and behind float out the long ends of a fillet or band, which seems to confine these exuberant locks. On his right side hangs a quiver of arrows; and his right hand holds the hand of an individual on foot, clad in a short tunic and bonnet, who may be an attendant, or perhaps a Roman prisoner. His horse is plainly caparisoned, and has a kind of poitrel or ornamented band crossing the breast. Under the horse's feet lies a dead figure. Valerian kneels on his left knee, in front of Shapoor's horse, with his hands raised in a supplicating posture. He is dressed in a Roman tunic, cap and belt, with a short straight sword at his side. Immediately behind him, stand two other figures, probably Romans. A little winged figure, like a Cupid, flutters above the group, and appears to present a wreath or palm of victory, or something of the kind, to Shapoor.* Between the horse's head, and the countenance of the suppliant Valerian, there are

* Valerian was conquered by Shapoor at Edessa, in A.D. 260. Being taken prisoner, he is said to have been treated by Shapoor with great severity, and eventually flayed alive.

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a few lines of some inscription, nearly effaced, and unintelligible.

The figures composing this group are all as large as life. On either side of this centre piece, are smaller compartments, each about five feet long, divided in two rows, of figures rather smaller than life, one above another. The part behind Shapoor's figure consists of two rows of horsemen, five in each; and that behind Valerian contains men on foot, six in the upper, and nine in the lower row. The piece of levelled rock, on which this tablet has been sculptured, is exceedingly hard and well polished; and the sculpture is in wonderfully good preservation. This tablet has frequently been drawn by different travellers —the best representation I have seen of it, is in Morier's Second Journey.

I then crossed the river, to examine the four tablets on the opposite bank. The principal of these is nearly thirty-four feet in length, and consists of two rows of figures. In the centre of the upper row, is a person seated, with his right hand extended, and his left on the hilt of his sword: he is evidently a monarch, and probably meant for Shapoor himself. At his right hand, stand a number of figures of men in tunics and belts, having their right hands raised, with the forefinger erect; and on his left is a similar group with their hands below their girdles. The lower row contains a procession, apparently of soldiers conducting prisoners; and in the centre is an in-

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dividual holding up two human heads, for the king's inspection. Opposite to him, a person is leading a saddled horse. This tablet is by no means as distinct or perfect as the one I have described on the other side of the river. The rock is softer, and the sculpture more worn. A little on one side of this, is another tablet containing two gigantic figures on horseback, both apparently kings, by their crowns surmounted by footballs, extending their right hands and grasping a ring, supposed to be an emblem of peace. In their left hands they carry clubs: they are attired in long robes; and their horses, though well executed, are rather small in proportion to the riders. Beyond this lies a long tablet, a few paces distant, the lower portion of which has been quite effaced. All that remains is a representation of a number of men's heads, with the heads and necks of two camels, meeting with another personage wearing a crown and football, holding in his hand a bow and a number of arrows.

The fourth and last tablet on this side of the river, is an extensive group, more than forty feet long, and divided into a number of compartments, containing a great variety of objects. Some of these divisions contain squadrons of cavalry: others consist of prisoners with their hands bound. In one, there are a number of servants or soldiers bearing spoil; and in the middle is the figure of the king with a suppliant kneeling before him, and another person standing by, holding forth a

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ring, symbolical of peace. Beside this, is a company of men, one of whom is leading a saddled horse and an elephant. Below is a chariot drawn by two horses. The elephant was once common in Persia. When the Moslems conquered this country, the fire-worshipping Persians had many elephants in their army.* The animal is now as rare here, as in England.

All of these sculptures are in relief, varying in height from one to three inches above the smoothed surface of the rocks. They are at a considerable distance above the level of the river. Just below the four last-mentioned tablets, a deep channel is cut in the face of the rock, for the conveyance of water I suppose. It is, for the most part, about three feet in breadth, but narrower in some places.

About the skirts of the hills, there were bramble bushes, from which I picked some ripe blackberries. This fruit is here denominated "the hill mulberry." I observed on the banks of the river, a number of magpies, the first I had seen for many years. Lions are numerous in the jungle hereabouts: they do much damage to cattle, but rarely attack men. The Persian lion

* In the Syrian armies anciently, the elephant seems to have been much employed. According to the Apocrypha (1st Maccabees, vi. 35. 37.) Antiochus, when warring against Judas Maccabæus, had in his army elephants, guided by Indian drivers; each having on his back a strong wooden tower, containing thirty-two fighting men!—an apocryphal story indeed!

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is a smaller animal, than the monarch of the wilds in Africa and Northern India.

I had just finished a hasty breakfast of bread, dates and hard-boiled eggs, washed down with a cup of cold water; when a party of seven Eeliautees, returning from a hunting excursion, rode up; and seeing me, dismounted in order to satisfy their curiosity by having a talk with the Frank stranger. They belonged to a Toorkee tribe, encamped on the plain, near the entrance to the valley. The first who accosted me, and who seemed to be the leader of the party, was a perfect juvenile Hercules. His age could not have been twenty; for he had not a vestige of a hair upon his handsome face, but he was very tall, powerfully built; and remarkably good-looking. This young gentleman was particularly anxious to know whether I could discover hidden treasures by means of magic: deeming, no doubt, that I must have come to the site of ancient Shapoor, for no other purpose than to seek for buried hoards, long concealed from the light of the sun. The Persians are not generally eager to obtain buried wealth, as they entertain a superstition that treasure trove rarely prospers with the finder; and is more commonly a source of misfortune than of benefit. My new acquaintance was very civil, and invited me to his encampment. He showed me his gun, which, he said, had an English barrel, though stocked and mounted in the Persian fashion. His assertion was correct;

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for the barrel bore, in gold letters, the honoured name of Joseph Manton. His companions carried rifles; and all their weapons were elaborately mounted with silver. The Eeliautees, and indeed all Persians, take great pride in their arms, which are generally very good. Rifles, carbines, swords, and dirks of Persian manufacture, are highly prized all over Asia.

When I mentioned to these Eeliautees that I was desirous of visiting a famous cavern, in a neighbouring mountain, containing the only statue known in Persia; but that my guide did not know the way thither; they at once volunteered to conduct me: and as no time was to be lost, we mounted and set off.

Along the valley there are numerous deep and narrow wells and pits, without any sort of parapet or protection to their mouths; and which must be very dangerous to cattle, as well as to wayfarers on dark nights. I observed many blocks of carved stone—fragments of the ancient city—lying among the reeds and shrubs on the river side. On reaching the foot of the mountain, in which the cave is situated, we dismounted, and I clambered up, accompanied by the young chief and two others. The ascent was sufficiently toilsome, the mountain being extremely steep and rugged, and in many places nearly perpendicular. The lower part of this mountain presents a high skirt, covered with masses of limestone; above which rises a lofty rock of limestone, 700 feet in height, as Baillie Fraser has stated.

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The entrance to the cavern is—according to the same authority, and I doubt not his accuracy—140 feet above the base of this rock, and the scramble up is certainly neither easy nor particularly safe. I should not have accomplished, or even attempted it, but for the assistance rendered me by my companions, who seemed to be quite as much at their ease, when ascending a perpendicular rock, as when riding in the valley beneath; and who pulled, pushed and carried me up precipitous places, which I should never have thought of venturing to ascend alone. I was nearly an hour in reaching the mouth of the cave, which (I again quote Fraser) is about 40 feet high, and 150 broad; formed like an arch. The cavern is enormous; but being unfortunately unprovided with torches, or any light except a single wax candle, I was not able to inspect its dimensions, as I could have wished.

A few paces from the entrance within, is a recess in one side, in which lies the colossal image of King Shapoor; the only statue known to exist in Persia, all other sculptures being merely in relief.* This statue, which when erect, must have been about twenty feet high, is lying prostrate with the head downwards and half concealed in soil and rubbish; its legs being broken off at the ankles. Close beside it stands the pedestal with

* There are a few rude statues or images of lions and other animals, to be seen in many parts of the country; but this is the only one of a human figure.

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the two feet upon it: this pedestal and statue have both been cut from the same mass of rock. The dress of Shapoor is much the same as in the tablets I have described; namely, a long robe with a belt round the waist, and another cross-belt over the right shoulder. The head is sadly mutilated, and I found it, besides, so imbedded in the soil, that I could not see more than one half of it. The hair in huge masses of curls, descends on the shoulders, and round the neck is a collar of beads. The arms are both mutilated. My companions were full of marvellous stories regarding the vast extent of this cave, which they asserted abounded in *tilisms* (talismans or enchantments). Having no light, save one feeble candle, I was unable to explore any part of it. Its extent is really very great, and abounds in ramifications and passages in many directions; not one-half of which have ever been explored. It is composed of yellowish limestone, and in many parts is nearly filled with splendid stalactites extending from floor to roof, a height of nearly 100 feet.

Having satisfied my curiosity as well as means would admit of, and descended the mountain, I could not do otherwise than accept the invitation previously offered, to visit the Eeliautee's dwelling; particularly as it lay on my way homewards. I was accordingly conveyed to their tents, low structures of thick, dark-coloured goatshair cloth, elevated on numerous slender poles; where I

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was entertained with a huge basin of sour milk; another of boiled rice, and sundry wooden platters of cream cheese, thin bread, dates and pomegranates. A boy present sang one or two songs during our repast: I did not much admire the music; and the words being in Toorkee, I could not understand them.

The Eeliauts* are the wandering or nomadic tribes of Persia, who live in tents and have no settled habitation. They are mostly of Toorkee, Arab and Koordish descent; and comprise a very large portion of the population of the country: though their actual numbers are not well known. They change their places of encampment with the season and climate — going in the summer to the *yeilauk* or quarters where pasturage and water are to be found in abundance; and when the cold of winter sets in, adjourning to the *kishlauk* or warmer region, in which their flocks and herds, as well as themselves, are better sheltered. In each province of Persia, there are two chiefs, acknowledged by all the tribes who roam in that province — namely, the Eelkhânee and the Eelbegee, the latter being subordinate to the former. These chiefs are possessed of great power and influence; and the government can rarely venture to quarrel with them. These offices are hereditary. The Eeliautee people generally despise civilisation, and hold the *shehree*, or dwellers in towns, in

* Eeliaut is the plural of *Eel*, a tribe or clan; and the term is always applied to the nomadic people.

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profound contempt. They are by no means particular in their religious observances; and are not ruled and influenced by the *moollahs*, as townsmen are. They are all, in a greater or less degree, professional robbers—some tribes living solely by rapine and plunder; and others resorting, only occasionally, to such means. They have large flocks and herds; which they often augment by taking possession of their neighbour's. The villagers hold them in great dread on this account. They manufacture carpets and cloth which they sell in the towns; and many of them serve in the Shah's army, where they are accounted the best soldiers possible. They are much attached to their chiefs, their parents and families: contrasting favourably, in this respect, with the townsmen, who are not remarkable for devoted affection. Their women are brought up to all kinds of masculine exercises, and many of them are excellent horsewomen and good shots. In their conduct and morals, the Eeliautee women are vastly superior to the females of the towns and settlements. They are chaste and correct in their lives, and faithful to their husbands. Many of the best families in Persia are of Eeliaut origin. The present royal family is of the Kajar tribe, a Turkish *Eel*, which came into this country with Teimour Lung.

On my way back, I attempted to make a short cut across the plain, being anxious to reach Kauzeroon before dark; and soon found myself

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bewildered among a number of watercourses, too broad and deep for my horse to cross, and from which neither I nor my guide could find a way to extricate ourselves, till we got the assistance of an old shepherd, who undertook to pilot us out of the difficulty. I entered into conversation with the old man; and among other matters, observed that it was very fortunate for him that the Mamasenni robbers had been extirpated from this place, as they must have been a sore plague to the inhabitants. He laughed, and told me that he was himself a Mamasenni, but now no longer a robber. He had escaped at the time when war was waged with the tribe; and had since returned, to devote his time and talents to the quiet and harmless occupation of herding sheep and goats. A pastoral life did not seem much to his fancy; and I have no doubt he would gladly have returned, if he could, to his old trade of "stouthrief and spulzie." He spoke, with great regret, of the dispersion of his tribe. They were once very numerous and powerful in these parts, but now "their fireplaces were darkened."* The scoundrelly Persian soldiery who had hunted them away, were themselves greater robbers, and infinitely worse oppressors of the poor, than the Mamasenni had ever been!

* This is a common Persian idiom. Speaking of a family ruined and dispersed, they say *oojaukishân koor shood*, "their fireplace is darkened." The Mamasenni are a Koordish tribe, claiming to be of great antiquity.

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Here, I believe, he spoke no more than the truth.

It was quite dark when I reached my lodgings in Kauzeroon. Twilight is of short duration in southern latitudes, and night comes on soon after the disappearance of the sun's last rays. Next morning, at sunrise, I went to visit the Baghi Nazar, a garden outside of the town, formerly the residence of Prince Teimour Mirza — one of the three Persian princes who were lionized in London some twelve years ago, and are now living at Baghdad — who was for some time governor of this part of the country. The garden was by no means in good order. The summer-house at the entrance was much decayed, and the walks overgrown with weeds. The walks are bordered with long rows of the cypress and *seffeedár* or white poplar; and the garden contains a good deal of fruit, which rents for 200 tomâns annually. In the centre, is an open building, consisting of four arches, with a tank of water in the middle — a favourite resort of Teimour Mirza, who used to sit here with his friends and quaff the forbidden juice of the grape, while looking on the evolutions of dancing girls.

Returning to breakfast, I stopped to visit the *zoor-khoneh* or palæstra, where wrestling and athletic feats are practised: but unfortunately, there was no one there at the time. The Kauzeroonees are famous wrestlers; and noted throughout

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Persia for their athletic skill, as the Cornish men in England.

Kauzeroon, though considered the second town in Fars (Sheerauz being the principal), is a poor place. It is said to be very ancient; and according to the *Nooz,het-ul-koloob* (Delight of hearts), a famous Persian work on geography and many other matters, was founded by Tahmuras the Dæmon-binder, in the earliest age of the world. It is, however, more probable that it did not exist till after the destruction of Shapoor. The bazar is wretched—scarcely anything being procurable, except the mere necessaries of life. There are two or three *Imaumzâdehs** or tombs of sacred personages, with domes like large stucco pineapples; the principal of which is the sepulchre of Hamza, the son of the Imaum Moosa, the seventh of the twelve great spiritual leaders of the Sheeahs. There are several gardens in the vicinity of the town; and the honey, dates and oranges of this place are excellent. The festival of the Moharram, which in this country is celebrated by a kind of dramatic representation of the events of that period, was being held at this time; and no small noise made at night, in consequence.

* *Imaumzâdeh* signifies son or descendant of an *Imaum*, and the term has been generally given to the tombs of these worthies, which are very numerous. Regarding the *imaums* I shall afterwards speak when giving some account of the Sheeah faith.

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A little before noon, we quitted Kauzeroon, proceeding in the direction of the chain of mountains bounding the eastern side of the plain. A march of about six miles, brought us to one extremity of lake Perishoon, an extensive sheet of water, lying at the skirt of the mountains. From this lake, a swamp extends to a considerable distance, and is crossed by a rough stone causeway, nearly a quarter of a mile long. At the end of the causeway, commences the ascent of the mountains; and here at the foot of a cliff stands a small resting-house for travellers, consisting of a court with a few small rooms or cells, built out from the flat face of the rock which forms the hinder wall of the court. Upon the rock, enclosed by the court, is a sculptured tablet, executed in imitation of the ancient style, and containing a representation of prince Teimour Mirza seated on a chair, with a tame lion beside him, while a servant in front, presents his *kaleon*. A musketeer, two other individuals, and a hawk on its perch, make up the group; which has been painted and gilded, but the colours and gold-leaf are nearly worn off. The figures are rather larger than life, and are somewhat defaced by being battered with stones by every wayfarer who entertains no good will to the Kajar family, or no grateful reminiscence of the prince's rule. The features of the prince are nearly obliterated. If Teimour Mirza hopes for immortality through this piece of sculpture, he is

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doomed to be disappointed. King Shapoor, though sixteen centuries older, will evidently survive him.

We now ascended the Kotuli Dokhter *, or "Pass of the Girl," which has been called the Simplon of Persia. A steep and toilsome ascent it is, but the precipitous path was, many years ago, rendered comparatively easy and safe, by being cut out and smoothed in many places, with buttresses built at the narrow parts, and strong parapets at all the salient angles. It was last repaired, some sixteen years ago, by the mother of Teimour Mirza; and it is to be hoped that some patriotic and liberal individual will soon repair it again. A fine view is afforded, of the lake and broad plains of Kauzeroon. At the summit of the pass is a *rahdár-khoneh* or guard-house, a small square tower; and near it the tomb of a Moslem saint. One of the *rahdárs* saluted me, as I approached, with "good morning Sir," and I found he could talk a little English. His father had served Sir John Malcolm, and he had since travelled with various Englishmen. He gave me a fine bunch of Sheerauz grapes, which was very acceptable after a tedious scramble under a hot sun.

The *rahdár* is a kind of policeman, stationed on the highway, to protect travellers, detect robbers, and levy duties on merchandise passing.

* *Dokhter* is evidently the same word as our "daughter," and is pronounced much the same as that word is in Scotland.

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Some travellers have complained of the incivility and importunate begging of these rahdâr guards; but I must say I have never yet met with the slightest rudeness, nor have I been asked for a farthing. There are two or three rahdârs at each guardhouse. According to old Persian custom, when a merchant has been robbed on the road, the governor of that part of the country, is bound to make good to him the value of what he has lost, upon his making oath to that effect. This rule is rarely observed now-a-days, but the authorities are not to be blamed for its having fallen into disuse. The people are too false and treacherous; and oaths are too little regarded. Merchants and travellers would contrive their own robberies, and the drain on the public purse would be unmerciful. The Prince of Sheerauz pretends to recompense robbed parties, by giving them an order on his treasury; but the cash-keeper is directed to pay no attention to the order, which is a mere bit of waste paper: and thus the prince saves his pocket and his conscience, at the same time.

After stopping half an hour at the guardhouse, we proceeded by a slight descent into the valley of Deshti Burr which is full of oaks. I saw a number of people gathering acorns, which they use in making bread. The acorns are dried in the sun, peeled, and pounded into flour. This flour is soaked in water for two or three days, to take off the bitter astringent taste: then mixed

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with an equal quantity of barley meal, and baked in thin cakes. They gave me a piece of this bread, which I did not much relish. Deshti Burr is surrounded with brown hills, mostly covered with the dwarf oak and other shrubs. What I have seen of Persian scenery is certainly far from prepossessing. How different from green, beautiful Ceylon! Here, one is out of the region of date trees. After leaving Kauzeroon, the date disappears, as the traveller ascends into the higher and colder regions; and its place is supplied by the oak, the poplar and the plane.

Having crossed the valley, we began to ascend the Koturi Peera Zen, or "Pass of the old woman;" a long and tedious pull, over a chain of mountains composed of white and yellow limestone, covered in most parts with a stratum of soil, bearing brushwood and stunted trees. The road was very stony and rough, but nowhere precipitous, or in the least dangerous. Half-way over, we arrived at a small caravansary situated in a nook under a huge crest of a hill; and here we halted for the night, as it was very late. Nothing was to be got in the way of supplies — neither *maust* nor fresh milk, no fowls or eggs, not even eatable bread, for I confess I am afraid of the confection of acorns — so I made my supper, in the best way I could, upon what I had with me. There is no village, or even house, anywhere near.

The night was very cold; and the *dâlandâr*

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(gatekeeper) told me that two nights ago, there had been frost, and thin ice. The climate of these high lands is very different from that of the Germseer. The mornings are cold and bracing, and the day never uncomfortably hot, at this season of the year. From some parts of the pass, near this spot, the sea is visible, though at least 100 miles distant: but I must admit that I did not see it. We left early in the morning, and I had no time to ascend any of the neighbouring summits for the sake of a view. The pass of the Peera Zen is about nine miles in extent. Having gone over the remainder of the rough route, we descended into the valley of Deshti Arjun (the plain of the wild almond) a level and extensive vale, with a swamp lying on one side.

Sir John Malcolm and others have described this as a cheerful and beautiful spot: and so perhaps it may be in summer; but at present, I could see nothing but a drab-coloured plain, surrounded by drab-coloured hills; with as little of cheerfulness or beauty about it, as need be. At the north-east extremity, there is a village, whither we directed our course; but before reaching it, we passed a spot, which I stopped to examine. Here a fine stream of clear water issues from beneath a huge marble rock, which forms part of the boundary of the valley; and is surrounded, at its source, by a small grove or clump of willow, oak and *chenâr** trees. In this

* The *chenâr* is the Oriental plane (platanus orientalis), a very handsome tree, growing to a great height. The trunk is

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grove, stands a small domed building, erected on the site of a notable miracle; such as only the ardent faith of a Sheeah could credit. This is one of the many hundreds, or thousands, of absurdly miraculous stories, ascribed to Alee (the false prophet's cousin and son-in-law) whom the Persians almost deify.

This holy personage, they assert and believe, performed innumerable miracles, not only during his lifetime, but long before he was born; being permitted to visit this sublunary world for that purpose! On the present occasion, as the story goes, one Salmân a Jew, who was cotemporary with Mahommed, was travelling across the Deshti Arjun; and halted at this stream to bathe. When he had pulled off his clothes and stepped into the water, he perceived a fierce lion coming towards him, and gave himself up for lost. Suddenly there appeared a veiled horseman, armed with a double-bladed sword; who slew the lion on the spot. Salmân terrified and confused, plucked a handful of hyacinths from the bank of the water, and threw them to the horseman, who presently vanished. Many years after this, when Salmân had renounced Judaism, and become one of the most intimate companions of Mahommed (indeed he is supposed to have assisted that impostor in

straight, gradually tapering, and covered with a shining white bark. The tree was not in leaf, when I saw it for the first time. The wood of the *chendr* is hard, close-grained, and excellent for all kind of carpenter's work.

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the compilation of his Koran) he went one day into a date grove, along with Alee, then a child of seven years old: and there the young "chief of the faithful" began amusing himself by pelting his elder companion with datestones. "Be quiet you urchin," said Salmân. "Do'st call me an urchin?" retorted Alee. "Remember how I once saved your life on the Deshti Arjun"—and he pulled out the very handful of hyacinths which Salmân had formerly given him! I read this story in a curious old MS. which I procured at Kauzeroon.* In an inner room in the small building, there is a slab of stone, with four indentations on its surface, which those who choose, may believe to be the impressions of the hoofs of Alee's horse! The stream runs direct across the plain, and forms a small lake, on the other side, in the middle of a swamp of reeds.

There was no caravansary in the village, so I was accommodated in a private house; where I found the people very civil. I got some excellent

* The volume in question is named the *Ajâ,ib-ul-mahlookât* or "Wonders of the Creation"—treating of natural and supernatural history, geography, astronomy, and many other matters. Wonders indeed they are, more absurd and preposterous, than anything recorded in the voyages of that adventurous merchant Sindbad, or in the travels of Sir John Maundeville. Such a book is amusing from its very absurdity; but it is pitiful to think that an intelligent people, like the Persians, should, in the absence of all better instruction, believe in such vile trash, as implicitly, as if it was the best authenticated information that could be offered to their notice.

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fresh milk and butter; and had a dinner of fish from the lake. Butter is seldom good in Persia —it is made of milk, not cream, and churned by being put into a *kheeg* or goatskin, which is hung up between two sticks, and swung backwards and forwards till the butter is formed. It generally tastes of the *kheeg*, which is nothing more than a bag or flask made of the entire skin of the animal, untanned, with the head and legs cut off, and the orifices sewed up, leaving one opening for the mouth. The *karra* or fresh butter, is seldom used: it is generally kept till it turns rancid, and then clarified by repeated boiling, till it becomes *roughun*, which we call "ghee" in India. The village contains about 250 houses, but the greater number of them were in ruins, and the place looked dismal. The numerous herds of cattle, about the plain, evinced however, a greater degree of comfort and competence, than one would expect.

This place is about twelve miles distant from the caravansary where we had spent the night. The climate was delightful, and the sun not in the least oppressive; so after a three hours' halt, we resumed our journey to Kâni Zenion, twelve or thirteen miles farther on. The road lay among hills, for the greater part of the way, but the ascent was little if any. Passing the hill of *Seeneh-seffeed* or "white breasted," we proceeded along the slope of the hills, at the foot of which flowed a fine stream of beautifully pellucid water,

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named the *chashma,e marvâreed* or "fountain of pearls." The route was winding and undulating; and the high ground well wooded. There was abundance of the *bann* or mastich tree, the *arjun* a species of wild almond*, the *zirishk* or barberry, and the *kiyâlek*, a very large kind of hawthorn, which bears a yellow berry, the size of a cherry with the scent of a quince, which the peasants collect and eat. I have seen this latter tree in Syria, where it is called *zâroor*. We next crossed the Karagatch river, the bed of which is full of willows and tamarisks; and observing numbers of partridges running about in the brushwood, I called a halt and took my gun. Half an hour's labour, was rewarded with two brace of birds: but had I had a dog with me, I might have killed many more. I met here with a party of *shikâr-chees* or hunters, who were out after large game. They told me that they usually netted partridges and quail, rather than waste powder on such small game; and shot antelope and bear. According to their account, there are quantities of wild hog, in the bed of this river. As it grew dark, we reached Kâni Zenion; a dirty caravansary, standing alone, on elevated ground, above a

* The *arjun* has been pronounced, by some writers, to be a species of the birch — not of the almond genus; and I am not botanist enough to decide. The bark of this shrub is striped brown and yellow, and the wood is exceedingly tough and hard. The knobbed sticks which the peasantry and villagers invariably carry, are almost all cut from this tree.

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brook of fresh water. There was in former days, a village here; but it has disappeared, with the exception of two or three wretched huts.

We were now fairly on the table-land of Persia. The entire route from the Germseer, hither, resembles a flight of stairs, with flats or landing-places at intervals: the first stair being the pass of Mullooh, leading to the landing-place of Koonar Tukhteh — thence the pass of Kumâridj conducts to the level ground, which varies but little as far as Kauzeroon. From that level, the "girl" leads to higher regions; and finally the "old woman" brings the traveller upon the table of the interior. The whole journey is an incessant scramble among dreary chains of hills; chiefly of limestone, with occasional masses of marble and gypsum.

Next day I quitted this place in the forenoon, and after going over some twenty-three miles of a tolerably good, but very ugly and uninteresting road, passing through a brown sterile country, where not a village, house or sign of cultivation appeared; we reached the Rahdâri Chenâr, a guard-house and caravansary, one farsakh and a half, or about five miles, distant from Sheerauz. Before me, across an expanse of stony plain, lay the famous city, of which I had heard and read so much; and which was to me, as much a classic spot, as the field of Troy ever was to any Homer-stricken pedant.

Crossing a bridge over a muddy stream, hard by the guardhouse, we entered the plain of Shee-

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rauz, a very extensive vale, bounded by chains of barren mountains. Most part of this plain is stony and barren; but no inconsiderable portion has been brought under cultivation. The numerous gardens, with rows of tall dark green cypresses appearing above their walls, imparted a slight ray of cheerfulness, to a landscape, which would otherwise, at this season, wear a very sombre aspect. As it was, nothing could worse correspond with the ideas I had formed of this famed spot, which has been eulogized by the poets of Fars as if it was an earthly paradise. The sun was near setting, as we passed a large walled garden, called the Baghi Cherâgh: and thence proceeding onwards, we entered the city by the Kauzeroon gate. As it was getting dark, I was conducted direct to the Armenian quarter, where I put up for the night, in the house of one Carapett, an Armenian Christian trader; and my dinner was procured from the nearest baker and cookshop. The whole distance from Bushire to Sheerauz, I make out to be about 165 miles; but the rough road makes it appear much greater; and the most part of it being as destitute of interest as of beauty, I was not sorry to conclude my journey.

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CHAP. XIII.

Sheerauz.—A Persian Supper.—My Mansion.—Gardens.—Tomb of Háfiz.—The Fál or Omen, same as the Sortes Virgilianæ of our Predecessors.—The Odes of Háfiz.

I HAD just finished dinner when the owner of the house came in, with a large glass bottle of wine, which he insisted on my tasting; and presently there dropped in, two Mahomedans of his acquaintance, to have a talk with the Frank stranger. The big bottle was offered them by my host, whereupon one of them took upon himself to pronounce an edifying harangue on the advantages and disadvantages of winebibbing, which lecture he concluded by taking a large teacupfull of the forbidden liquor, and straightway launched into a discussion on the various vintages of Sheerauz, in a way that showed him to be intimately acquainted with them all. He and his companion finished the bottle, which held at least three quarts, between them, before they thought proper to take their departure. The *kaleon* being introduced, conversation became general; and I was pestered with silly questions, to my no small dis-

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comfort, for I was tired and sleepy, and would gladly have dispensed with company. The two Moslems were ignorant illiterate fellows, who made up for want of information, by the loudness and fluency of their talk.

They tried to convince me that Buonaparte would certainly have taken India from the English, had not their Shah prevented him!—that though he had overrun nearly the whole world, he never dared to invade Persia, so terrified were his envoys at the *puissance* of the Shah's court and army!—and that Russia would now march an army into India, were not the Czar dismayed at the idea of invading Persian ground!—A good deal more of equally profitable and instructive matter, was unfolded for my edification. They evidently supposed their Shah to be the greatest monarch on earth, and their country to be of the first importance among kingdoms of this world. The Armenian host, who had travelled and seen something of the world, was quietly laughing in his sleeve at them; while I thought of Æsop's fly perched on a running chariot, and congratulating itself with "What a mighty dust I do raise!"—At length, to my relief, they went away; and five minutes after, I was sound asleep.

Ever since the English and French embassies contended for influence, at the court of Tehrân, in the early part of this century; Persia has been, in some degree, connected with the policy of Europe. Britain then drove France out of the

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field; and not long after we agreed to pay the Shah 200,000 tomâns annually, as long as he maintained war with Russia. This has contributed to give the Persian people a great notion of their own importance; which is not to be wondered at; for cut off from the civilized world, as they are, they have little or no opportunity of knowing any better. After all, there is quite as much stupid prejudice and ignorance to be found among many, in civilized Britain. How many are there, in our favoured isle, who having lived entirely at home, and rarely if ever, moved beyond the limits of their native town or place, are fully as illiberal and incorrect in their ideas of other people, places, and things; and quite as puffed up with inflated notions of their own worth and importance, as these untutored Persians! And these have not the excuse which the latter possess; for in an enlightened and well-informed nation, ample means are afforded them, of disabusing themselves in respect to such particulars — but narrow minds will naturally cling so tenaciously to their darling opinions and prejudices; that no amount of evidence to the contrary, can suffice to persuade them of their fallacy.

Next morning, I resolved on hiring a house for myself; and this was done immediately by my servant — so that, in less than a couple of hours, I was installed in the dwelling I now inhabit; which is situated in the *mehalla* (parish or

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quarter) of Meidani Shah, and belongs to a Mahomedan, one of the managers of the mint at Sheerauz. In the evening, my landlord invited me to supper, that is to say, he invited himself to my lodgings, bringing the supper with him.* This was my first regular Persian meal. The cookery was very good: it was much in the same style as that of Indian Mahomedans, Arabs and Turks; but better than any I had ever tasted before. He brought some Sheerauz wine for me, but drank none himself. After the principal dishes had been removed, sweetmeats and fruit were brought. Among the former, there was that Persian delicacy, the *gezangabeen* or manna of the tamarisk, made up in little cakés of a white colour and looking very like shaving-soap: I did not much relish it: it has a sweet sickly flavour; and reminded me of a delectable condiment y'clept "stickjaw," greatly coveted in my schoolboy days. There was also *kooloocheh*, round cakes of excellent shortbread, as good as any I ever tasted in Edinburgh. We had besides, some fine grapes, white and black. These, with oranges and pomegranates, are almost the only fruit left at this season.

* To send a dinner to another person, is a common compliment among Moslems. In Persia, when requesting permission to do this, the party begs leave to send a little *nooni-jow* "barley bread," which humble phrase may include "every delicacy of the season." In India the phrase is *dál khooshka* "split peas and rice."

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Tea and the *kaleon* wound up the evening; and as night advanced, mine host—who is a good-natured, sensible sort of man, not prejudiced for a Moslem, and by no means as great a liar as the generality of his countrymen—withdrew, leaving me to dream of the sights I was to commence inspecting, under his guidance, on the morrow.

I mentioned already that I had hired a house: and this mansion I shall endeavour to describe; as the detail will serve to convey an idea of Persian houses in general. The only visible sign of the house, in the street, is a low door, which is kept barred in the inside. It is constructed of thick timber, embossed with large iron knobs, and having an iron knocker suspended above the keyhole. No window or other aperture relieves the uniformity of the high mud-coloured wall. Entering by this door, a short passage called the *dihleez*, leads into the *hyât* or court of the house, a space of thirty feet square, the greater part of which is paved with slabs of stone; having in the centre, an oblong tank of water, about five feet deep, constructed of stone: and on either side of the tank, a small plat of ground, in which grow half a dozen orange trees, a few rosebushes, jessamine shrubs, and other flowers. Round this court, the house is built; the principal part of it, being directly opposite to the entrance. The end where the entrance lies, is occupied by the kitchen and one or two closets. On either side of the court, leading from this,

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are four small rooms, some of which are occupied by the servants, while the others remain empty, or are used as occasion requires.

The chief part of the house, inhabited by myself, and facing the entrance, consists of two stories with a flat roof above: and the greater portion of the lower story is occupied by the *deevan-khoneh* or principal room, which is raised a few feet higher than the level of the court. This apartment is about 16 feet square, and the side of it, towards the court, is entirely occupied by the *ooroosee*, a large window of coloured glass, extending the whole length and height of the room. The *ooroosee* merits particular description. It is a kind of proscenium, the upper part of which, consists of open woodwork, carved, painted and gilt; and containing an infinite number of minute panes, or rather bits, of coloured glass, arranged in fancy patterns. From this upper half, descend five sashes, sliding in grooved posts: each sash being seven feet high, and reaching down to the floor. These are also composed of little panes of stained glass, fitted into the woodwork: and any or all of these sashes can be opened, by sliding it upwards into the higher portion of the *ooroosee;* so that the whole apartment can be thrown open to the court, or completely closed, according to the inmate's pleasure. Above the *ooroosee*, on the outside in front, is fastened a curtain, like a dropscene, which is let down and pulled up, by means of cords and

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pulleys. In hot weather, this curtain is often lowered, to keep out the glare and heat, while the *ooroosee* is thrown open. I should observe that no putty is used in a Persian window. The little pieces of glass are fitted into grooves in the woodwork; and when fresh pieces are to be inserted in the room of broken ones, it is often necessary to take a great part of the window to pieces. Much taste is often displayed, in the construction of an *ooroosee;* and in palaces and great houses, this is generally a very handsome affair.

The other three sides of the room, have a *hizára* or wainscot (if it can properly be so termed) of level white plaster, painted with flowers, running round to the height of three feet; and above this, the wall is worked into *taukcheh* or niches, also of white varnished plaster, ornamented with a profusion of painting and gilding, representing birds, flowers, and shrubs. Above this, runs a cornice of gold and azure, about eight feet from the floor: and the upper part of the wall is occupied by a representation of his late majesty Fat,h Alee Shah sitting in state, and attended by ten ladies. The figures, which extend round three sides of the room, are nearly as large as life, and gaudily coloured. Whether they are good likenesses or not, I cannot pretend to say. The ceiling is in keeping with the rest of the apartment; being covered with painting and gilding in mosaic or arabesque pattern.

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There is a great waste of paint and gold leaf, in these decorations; and according to my taste, a room would look better, with a more sparing allowance of colours and glitter.

The floor is covered with a mat; above which is an ordinary carpet, and round the sides of this, are spread the *nummuds* or thick doubled layers of felt, upon which the Persians seat themselves. In the centre of the wall, opposite to the ooroosee, is the *bookhâree* or fireplace, a narrow kind of stove, without a grate, projecting slightly from the wall. At the sides of the room, are doors leading into small antichambers, called the *kefsh-ken* or "pull off shoe;" for here every one leaves his shoes, previous to stepping over the *durgah* (threshold) of the chief room. From the front of these antichambers, a few stone steps lead down to the court; and at the sides lie the *san-dook-khonehs* or closets for stowing away trunks and baggage. Beside these closets, proceed narrow, tortuous staircases, conducting to the story above. This upper story consists of two *goosh-wâras* or small rooms, used as sleeping apartments. Each apartment has a small ooroosee in front; and the walls are of white stucco, ornamented with figures of birds done in relief. Beside these sleeping rooms, two doors, approached by a few steps, lead out upon the *bâm* or terraced roof of the house. This roof, which is very thick and substantial, has a *mahjer* or low parapet wall

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running round it*, and is furnished with several *nâvdân* or long wooden spouts, to carry off the rain.

In the heat of summer, people commonly sleep on the roof at night, and at this season, they sit there during the day, to bask in the sun.

The doors in the house, all consist of two leaves. They are badly fitted, and do not suffice to keep out the cold and wind; for which purpose, a chintz curtain is generally hung up in front of each door, inside of the room. Each *linga* (leaf or division) fastens by means of a few links of chain, called the *chift*, which fits upon the *reeza*, a kind of hasp, fixed in the top of the doorframe. To this hasp, a padlock is attached, when it is requisite to fasten the door securely. The outer door of the court, leading into the street, is secured by a lock, as well as by a thick wooden bar, called the *koloon*.

House-rent is by no means expensive in this country. The rent of an ordinary house, such as I have described, is about two tomâns (eighteen shillings) per month.

Persian houses are all built much on the same principle: but those inhabited by men of wealth and rank, having families and numerous dependants, are much larger, and cover a great space of ground; being divided into two compartments—

* It is incumbent on a Persian, to build a parapet round his roof, as it was on the Jews. — *See* Deuteronomy, xxii. 8.

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the *zenána* or part occupied by the women; and the *merdána*, where the lords of the creation dwell — which are distinct and separate. In these mansions, a second courtyard with garden-plats and tank of water, lies behind the gentlemen's quarters, and contains another division of the house, similar to the first, wherein the ladies and female attendants live: and here, the chief wife's authority is paramount, even to the exclusion of her liege lord, if she does not choose to be troubled with his company. Here the ladies receive their visitors, and give entertainments, &c., to which none of the other sex are, on any account, admitted.

I should observe, that the upper story of a house, instead of being divided into two small apartments, as in mine, which I have described, often consists of one room, as large as that below, having closets at the sides, and opening towards the court, with an ooroosee. This is termed the *balakhoneh;* a word from which our "balcony" is probably derived.* Many dwellings are also furnished with a *zeer-zemeen* or *serdaub*, a subterraneous apartment, lighted from above; which is resorted to in summer, and is cool in the hottest weather.

In the best houses, the ornamental work is

* In India, the term *balakhoneh* is commonly, but erroneously, given to the flat terrace on the top of the house, which is properly styled the *pooshti-bám* "exterior of the roof."

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executed in first-rate style. The ooroosee is a splendid arrangement of coloured glass — the roof is beautifully arabesqued — the *taukchehs* (niches) finely painted — and the *jirz* or spaces of the wall between these niches, inlaid with looking-glass, neatly joined together. This has a very pretty effect, particularly when the lamps are lighted at night, and the apartment seems to be multiplied to an endless extent. In some of these mansions, the *deevan-khoneh* is very large, and has at one end, a *shahnisheen* or alcove, elevated on a dais, in which the inmates usually sit. This alcove often has a small ooroosee occupying its back, which leads into a *tanabee* or inner room behind. Above the alcove, is commonly a *ghoorfa* or upper apartment, open to the *deevan-khoneh;* and here they sometimes sit, in hot weather, as being cooler than down below. A *bâdgeer* or windtower, such as I described at Bushire, is occasionally erected above; but this addition to the dwelling, is not so common or so necessary, on the table land of Fars, as in hotter regions.

I ought to mention that in one corner of the court, there is generally a draw-well, having a wooden wheel over it, with a rope and leathern bucket. Upon the roof, there are two or three chimney tops, built of brick, three or four feet in height; and sometimes a *sukkoo* or platform, in the centre, a few feet high, upon which the beds are spread in the warm summer nights. Many houses have besides, a kind of eaves of wood-

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work, three or four feet broad, extending round the top of the house, outside of the parapet wall. This wooden ledge, called the *toorra*, is plastered on the upper side, and painted and gilt on the lower. I have now hastily described a Persian dwelling, as accurately as lies in my power, without being too minute in regard to particulars: and hope I have succeeded in making myself intelligible.

In the morning, I went in company with my landlord, to view the gardens and remarkable places, in the vicinity of the town; and we proceeded, in the first place, to visit the tombs of the two great bards of Sheerauz, Hâfiz and Sâdee, with whose works I had long been familiar. Leaving the city, by the gate of Baghi Shah, we rode forth into the plain, and turning northwards, passed, at some little distance, the palace of Takhti Kajar, and the gardens of Baghi Now and Jehân Nemâ; which I shall afterwards describe, as I visited them on the following day.

The plain or valley of Sheerauz is about twenty-five miles long, by ten or twelve broad; and is surrounded with bare limestone mountains. Besides the city and its environs, the plain is dotted over with numerous villages and gardens. On the eastern side, about six or seven miles distant from the city, lies a salt lake called the Deryâ,e Nemek or "sea of salt."

Near the corner of the Baghi Now garden, stand the remains of a square brick building, on

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a stone foundation; with a *mihrâb* or niche in the direction of Mecca, indicating a place of prayer. This was pointed out to me, as having been part of the Mosella: a favourite resort of Hâfiz and his companions, often mentioned in his songs. The stone foundation is as old as the time of the poet himself. At the great annual festival of Eidi Korban, the people come hither to sacrifice a camel.

Not far from this, lies the tomb of the great lyric bard of Persia, in a garden named the Hâfizeeya, about half a mile north-east of the Ispahan gate of the city. The garden, which is scarce two acres in extent, is surrounded with a brick wall about twelve feet high; and is divided into two portions, by a kind of summer-house, running across the centre from side to side. The southern half of the garden is several feet lower than the rest, and is filled with trees and shrubs; while the upper division is, in fact, a burying ground, containing, besides the tomb of Hâfiz, a great number of monuments. The exterior wall enclosing the upper half, is worked in *tauk-nemâ* or false arches, a common fashion here, which looks better than a plain brick partition. The door of the garden is on the west side of the upper half, and in the centre of the cemetery, lies the grave of Hâfiz, covered with a huge slab of marble, on the surface of which are sculptured two of the poet's odes. This marble is of a yellowish colour, streaked with veins of red,

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white, and green; and closely resembles Egyptian alabaster. It is brought from a quarry near Yezd. The slab was placed here about ninety years ago, by Kureem Khan, then sovereign of Persia, and who made Sheerauz his capital; who with very doubtful propriety, removed the old monument, which had stood here since the poet's interment. The slab is more than nine feet long, about four feet broad, and a foot and a half thick. The odes are beautifully carved in low relief, upon its level surface — one occupying the centre of the stone, and the other inscribed round the margin of the first. There formerly stood beside the tomb, a cypress tree, said to have been planted by the hand of Hâfiz; and which, the custodian of the garden told me, took fire and was burnt, some years ago. It is a common belief, among the Persians, that the cypress, as well as many other trees, when very old, take fire spontaneously and consume. Around the grave of Hâfiz, lie numerous tombs, some of them prettily sculptured. In this portion of the garden, are one or two cypresses and pines, and a tank of water.

The summer-house dividing the garden, consists of a *tâlâr* or open hall, with four pillars supporting its roof; and rooms on either side. It is rather out of repair, and in no very cleanly condition. The lower division of the garden is thickly planted; but no proper care seems to be taken of it, and the shrubs have been allowed to run wild. In this place, a solitary date tree, or

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rather, the defunct stump of one, was shown me, as the only tree of this description existing at Sheerauz. The climate here, is much too cold for the date, and this never bore any fruit. It cannot now be said to exist, for the stump was evidently dead and decaying.

The voice of the nightingale is now mute, in the bowers of Sheerauz. At this season, philomel has fled to other regions; and will not return hither, till the roses blow in spring.

The keeper of the garden has in his charge, a large and finely written copy of the works of Hâfiz, which was transcribed and placed here, in Kureem Khan's time. It has been asserted that the copy written by Hâfiz's own hand was taken from hence by Shah Abbas the Great: but this must be an error, as it is generally known that Hâfiz, like Shakespeare, left no complete volume of his works; which were not collected and given to the world, until after his decease.

Of the life of Khaja Shems-ud-deen, surnamed Hâfiz, very little is known; and it appears to have been in no degree remarkable for incident. He was born at Sheerauz in the beginning of the fourteenth century, and died here in A. D. 1388. The life of poets and literary men, is usually so uniform and commonplace, as to present little or nothing for the notice of biographers. What do we know of the career of Shakespeare, save the place and date of his baptism and death?—all the rest is little else than mere conjecture.

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The veneration which the Persians entertain for the memory of this prince of lyric poets, is extreme: and he is regarded by them as little, if at all, inferior to an inspired mortal. His odes are considered, and I believe justly so, unrivalled and incomparable. The few attempts that have been made to render some of these odes into English, are sad failures—in fact, they will not bear translation into another tongue. The versions of Sir William Jones, Mr. Nott and others, convey little more than a faint idea of the original.*

The poems of Hâfiz, like the Koran, are often consulted, by taking an omen or lot therefrom, on urgent occasions, or when about to undertake some project of doubtful expediency. Sâdee is also, but less frequently, consulted for the like purpose. This practice resembles the "Sortes Virgilianæ," which Charles the First and his courtiers were wont to have recourse to, as a means of prying into futurity; or the taking lots from the Bible, a custom once in vogue in Britain, and about as sensible and efficacious a method, as turning up a verse in Virgil.

There are several ways in which a *fâl* or omen may be sought: but the following is perhaps the most common mode. The person desirous of obtaining a *fâl*, takes a copy of Hâfiz in his

* I intend presently to offer a translation of a few of these odes, though I can hardly expect a tame prose version to be very successful.

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hands, and commences by propitiating the shade of the bard, in such terms as the following:—

اي حافظ شيرازي
كاشف هر رازي
ما طالب يک فاليم
يک وصف الحالي مناسب براحوال مابکو
روحت شاد باد

"O Hâfiz of Sheerauz
Revealer of every secret
We seek of thee an omen
Grant us a suitable one according to our circumstances.
And may thy soul be happy."

Having repeated this invocation, he takes the closed volume in his left hand, and shutting his eyes, feels along the edges of the leaves with his right forefinger, and opens the book at a venture. He should now look at the top of the page to the right*, and if an ode commences there, it must be read first: but should the line at the top of the page be in the middle of an ode, he must turn over, and commence from the beginning of that ode. This and the next should be read; and from their tenour and purport, the reader deduces his omen, whether propitious or the reverse. The first ode is the *fâl* or lot, and the second the *shâhid* or corroborative evidence. Should one bear a favourable interpretation, and the other the reverse, it is expedient to repeat the ceremony

* Some turn over seven leaves before reading, but the performance or omission of this part of the ceremony is optional.

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and seek another lot; which may also be done when neither ode can be construed into having any meaning that can possibly apply to the case: but this rarely happens, for Persian ingenuity seldom fails in finding out some occult meaning.

It has long been a common custom of the Sheerauzees to resort to the tomb of Hâfiz to take a lot from the copy of his poems there kept; being, I suppose, a more effectual plan than to take it from any inferior copy in their own houses. Kings and leaders of armies have come hither to consult their fate, when about to undertake any great project; as the chiefs of ancient Rome had recourse to the auspices of augurs and priests, on similar occasions. The Roman method of deriving omens from the entrails of slaughtered beasts, flights of crows, feeding of sacred chickens, &c., had less of romance, taste and fancy, and more of brutality and absurdity connected with it, than the Persian *fâl* which I have mentioned.

I have heard sundry stories of omens taken at this sacred spot; and may be allowed to recount some of them. Nadir Shah, during his ambitious career, visited Sheerauz with his army, after defeating the Affghans in several engagements; and presented himself at the tomb of Hâfiz, for the purpose of taking a *fâl*, in the presence of his chief officers, whereby to direct his future movements and operations. The anxiously expected

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omen proved to be a most encouraging ode commencing with—

سزد که از همه دلبران ستاني باج
چراکه برسر خوبان عالمي چون تاج
دو چشم مست تو برهم زده خطا و ختن
بچین زلف تو ماچین و هند داده خراج

"It is befitting that thou shouldst exact duty from all the great ones of this world; for in truth thou art the crown and paragon of all nobility. Cathay and Tartary tremble at the glance of thy vivid eyes — China and India must pay tribute to thy curled locks."

There is no doubt that Nadir had contrived beforehand that this favourable lot should turn up. He well knew what effect it must produce on his army; and how much his followers would be influenced by such a prestige. He himself cared nothing about it; for he was as destitute of superstition, as he was of religion and humanity.

The *fâl* which procured for Hâfiz's own corpse the rites of sepulture, has been often mentioned, but the legend will bear repetition. On the death of the poet, some of the rigidly righteous of his townsmen refused to inter his body, alleging that the profligate tendency of his compositions, fully showed the author to be unworthy of Moslem burial. Others who held a better opinion of the deceased, were highly indignant at this insulting objection, and a dispute arose, which the contending parties agreed to settle by an appeal to the

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poet's own obnoxious writings; when the first verse that appeared was—

قدم دریغ مدار از جنازهٔ حافظ
اگرچه غرق گناهست میرود به بهشت

"Withdraw not from the bier of Hâfiz; for though sunk in sin, he will still go direct to Heaven."

About fifteen years ago, one Agha Hâshim a derveesh of great sanctity died at Sheerauz; and when his friends wished to inter him in the Hâfizeeya, the design was opposed by some who perhaps thought that they had enough of the fraternity buried there already. The question was settled by a *fâl*, and the following verse being first turned up, led to the interment of the holy man in the desired spot:—

رواق منظر چشم من آشیانهٔ توست
کرم نما و فرود آ که خانه خانهٔ توست

"The sockets of mine eyes may serve as thy resting place. Be pleased to alight here, for this abode is thine own."

One day, a negro eunuch, belonging to the establishment of the prince, came to consult his lot; and having said his prayers beside the tomb, he desired the keeper to bring the book. The first line that met his eye was—

تو سیاه کم بها بین که چه در دماغ دارد

"Look at that pestilent black fellow—what silly notion has he got in his head?"

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This, as may be supposed, was enough for the poor negro, who flung down the volume and ran off, not caring to try his luck any further.

Many other instances of appropriate *fâls* are recorded; but the above specimens will suffice. To write down any more would be tedious, particularly as such trifles possess little interest to any, save those who profess to believe in them. The custodian insisted on my consulting an omen; and accordingly I fell upon an ode (a translation of which I shall presently attempt) recommending me to enjoy myself while transitory life lasts: with certain other excellent advice laid down in a half-earnest half-mystical strain.

It has been a matter of dispute whether the poetry of Hâfiz is to be taken in a literal or figurative sense, and whether the wine, roses, nightingales, music, love and intoxication, which form his favourite themes, are to be considered as actually intended "bonâ fide," or to be viewed in a metaphorical and spiritual light. Mahomedans are mostly of the latter opinion, but for the sake of the Anacreon of the East, I hope they are mistaken. A great deal of his poetry is, I am positive, far too natural and ingenuous, to be otherwise than really meant—though there is also much of the allegorical and mystical—and many of the recondite meanings and holy allusions, discovered since his days, were, I am convinced, never intended or contemplated by the bard himself; but have been invented by some of

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these wiseacres who delight in finding such mares' nests, and in turning plain sense into mystified nonsense.

The odes of Hâfiz are about six hundred in number; and besides these, there are a few other verses. The *ghazal* or ode should consist of not less than five, or more than eighteen couplets; the last line of each couplet terminating in the same letter of the alphabet.* The two first lines of the ode rhyme together, after which every alternate line; and the last verse always contains the assumed name of the poet. No bard calls himself by his own name, but invariably adopts a *takhalloos* or poetical surname—thus the surname of Shems-ud-deen was Hâfiz, literally signifying "a rememberer," and often given to those who can repeat the Koran by heart—an accomplishment not uncommon in this country; and one which our bard possessed.

Among the fraternity of *moollahs* and bigots of Sheerauz, there are some who condemn Hâfiz as a reprobate, and hold his writings in abhorrence. The poet himself has provided for these grumblers, in one of his songs—

كسي كيرد خطابر نظم حافظ
كه هيچش لطف در كوهر نباشد

"Those only will find fault with the verses of Hâfiz, who are themselves destitute of soul and feeling."

* The entire collection of a poet's odes, is termed a *deevân;* and they are arranged according to the letters in which the verses terminate.

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Near the Hâfizeeya, are two small streams of water, meandering through the plain. One of these is the famous Roknabad, celebrated in the verses of Hâfiz. It is a little insignificant brook, in some places scarce more than a foot in breadth, and nowhere so broad that a man cannot easily jump over it. Its source is about ten miles distant, to the northwards.

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CHAP. XIV.

Sheerauz continued.—Garden of the Chihl Ten.—The Tomb of Sâdee.—Village of Sâdeeya.—The Gardens Dil-Gusha.—Jehân Nemâ and Bâghi Now.—Persian Paintings.—Costume of the Persians.

Leaving the resting-place of Hâfiz, we turned our course towards that of Sheerauz's next celebrated poet Sâdee, nearly two miles off. At a short distance from the Hâfizeeya, we passed the garden of the Chihl Ten, or "forty bodies," so called from its containing the graves of forty derveeshes. This garden, and the building it contains, were constructed by Kureem Khan: but no care having been taken of them, both appear to be going rapidly to ruin. The garden is small and thickly planted; containing nothing remarkable, except the forty tombs in a row. The *imâret* or building is a mean-looking edifice. There is the tomb of a saint in the front room, the walls of which are daubed with wretched paintings of derveeshes. This garden, like several others, I am told, belongs to nobody in particular — that is to say, it is royal property, which the king never

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sees, hears or cares about — and has become a resort of idle filthy derveeshes and other vagabonds, who defile and destroy it in every way; tearing down the woodwork, and lighting fires therewith in the middle of the rooms. After stopping here for a few minutes, we went on to the garden of the Haft Ten or "seven bodies" which lies at the foot of the mountains. This was also made by Kureem Khan, and, like the Chihl Ten, is surrounded by a wall wrought in *tauk-nemâ* or false arches. The garden, which is of no great extent, is planted with rows of trees, among which are some large and fine specimens of the *kâj* or pinaster. It derives its name from the graves of seven holy personages, here interred; but who they were or when they lived, no one could inform me. The north side is occupied by a building, the principal part of which is a large open hall with marble pillars in front. This hall is raised several feet above the ground, and directly in front of it, is a cistern full of water. The walls are lined with slabs of green Tabreez marble; above which are fresco paintings representing various subjects. Over the doors at either end of the apartment, are rudely-executed portraits of Hâfiz and Sâdee, about half the size of life. Sâdee is represented as a grey-bearded elder, having an axe in one hand, and a *kashkool* or beggar's cup for alms, in the other — both implements commonly carried by religious mendicants. Hâfiz is portrayed as a young man, with a very long

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pair of moustaches; a club in his hand, and a *bouk* or derveesh's horn slung at his back. These portraits were done in Kureem Khan's time, but whether they are copies of any authentic likenesses, or not, is a doubtful question. The other paintings consist of Abraham's sacrifice, Moses tending the flocks of Jethro, and the discomfiture of Sheikh Senaan, a Moslem worthy whose story is told in a curious book entitled the *Mantik-ut-teir* or "Logic of Birds," by the famous Soofee poet Fereed-ud-deen Attaur of Nishapoor. Morier has related the story, but as his version is a very incomplete one—he had evidently never read the original—I shall recount it more fully. Sheikh Senaan was a pious character in former times, who had spent many years at Mecca, and had become so holy and devout, that he could heal diseases with a touch. One night he beheld in a dream, himself worshipping an idol at Constantinople; and being much troubled at this vision, he travelled thither in order to discover the meaning of the extraordinary revelation. On his arrival at the city, he saw an infidel Christian damsel seated on a housetop, and became stricken distracted by her surpassing beauty. He neglected his religious duties, and being completely infatuated with the fair infidel, whom he had once seen by chance, he went to her house and revealed his passion for her. The young lady was not a little diverted with her reverend lover, and having ridiculed him to her heart's content,

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she ordered him to prove his affection for her, by the performance of one of four deeds, which he should be at liberty to select — namely — to renounce his faith — to burn his Koran — to worship an image — or to get drunk. The sheikh regarded these alternatives with horror, but chose the last, as being the least evil; and when well intoxicated, he was easily induced to commit the other three crimes. His devotion to the lady still waxed warmer; and confessing that he preferred the hell (to which she was of course doomed) with her, to heaven without her — a very candid and complimentary admission — he urged her to marry him. She feigned consent, but being without money to commence housekeeping, she persuaded him to hire himself as a swineherd, and to feed hogs for a year, in order to earn some wages. The pupils and companions of the holy sheikh were meanwhile greatly scandalized at these unorthodox proceedings, but after arguing in vain with their infatuated pastor, in the midst of his piggery, they went and prayed earnestly for his return to his proper senses. One of the most zealous of the party, soon after beheld Mahommed in a vision, who promised to intercede for his once faithful follower, their love-stricken leader. The prophet's intercession proved successful; and the sheikh suddenly recoʌering from his fit of delirium, abandoned pigs and lady, and set off on his way back to Mecca, to expiate his peccadilloes by a course of penitential exercise at the sacred

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temple. Shortly after his departure, the hard-hearted Christian charmer experienced a curious dream, in which she saw the sun fall into her lap —rather an inconvenient lapful—but it seems that Sol in his glory had paid her this visit, in order to reprove her for treating the worthy sheikh so scurvily. She awoke from her dream to find herself repentant and amorous. Like the haughty sweetheart of Duncan Gray—

"She grew sick as he grew heal"—

and being as much in love with Sheikh Senaan, as he had formerly been with her, she travelled after and overtook him in the Arabian desert, where she avowed her love and admiration for him, renounced her own belief and turned Mahomedan, and—here poetical justice demands that the couple should marry and live happily all their days—but no; the lady having made this avowal and embraced Islâm—died on the spot—a very lame and impotent conclusion to a highly interesting and affecting story—and whether Sheikh Senaan was sorry or glad at her melancholy end, deponent sayeth not.

The painting here represents the Sheikh undergoing the ridicule and scorn of his companions. Persians, in general, do not object to pictures; holding that the mere superficies of a painting does not come within the prophet's prohibition of likenesses of living things, as statues and images do. Some oı the more strict among them, how-

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ever, condemn all paintings as well as more tangible figures. Soonnee Mahomedans almost invariably hold this latter opinion on the subject.

There are small rooms on either side of the hall, as well as chambers above; but all filthy, dilapidated and blackened with smoke.

Proceeding eastward for some distance, we turned round the corner of a prominent hill, and entered a stony and sterile valley, in the middle of which stands the Sâdeeya, an enclosure and edifice containing the sepulchre of Sâdee; and having beside it, a small village which goes by the same name. This place lies about two miles north-east of the city. A high brick wall encloses a square court, on one side of which is the building, consisting of three small chambers in the centre, having two other rooms above them; and flanked by two large vaulted apartments, entirely open in front to the weather. These rooms are all built in pointed Gothic, or more properly termed Saracenic, arches — formed in segments of intersecting circles—a style introduced into Europe from the East by the Crusaders, and somehow misnamed Gothic. In the open apartment to the southward, is the tomb of Sâdee; the grave being covered with a stone sarcophagus of oblong quadrangular shape, like a chest, open on top, and having small pinnacles at the corners. It is broken through the middle, and the inscriptions with which it is covered, are much obliterated. I looked in vain for the dates

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of the poet's birth and decease. This monument is the original one, placed over the bard's remains; but the edifice containing it, was erected by Kureem Khan. The whole building is dirty and dilapidated. It is now used as a sort of caravansary or lodging for derveeshes, or any wanderers who may choose to take up their temporary abode here. From the central small chamber, a staircase leads up to the flat-terraced roof covering the whole.

Sheikh Muslih-ud-deen, surnamed Sâdee, was born at Sheerauz, about A. D. 1194. He was a man of much learning and great piety, real or pretended. He travelled as a derveesh during the greater part of his life, and made the pilgrimage to Mecca, no less than fourteen times. He died here, at the immense age of 116 solar or 120 lunar years. In the biography usually prefixed to copies of his works, sundry tales are told of the miracles he was enabled, through the sanctity of his character, to perform: but none of these stories are worth repeating.

Sâdee is not as much respected and venerated as Hâfiz. The latter was an indubitable Sheeah; while the religious principles of Sâdee are doubtful: indeed from some passages in his works, it may be inferred that he was probably a Soonnee. At any rate, he was, by his own showing, a sufficiently bigoted Mussulman; but in his days, the Sheeah tenets had not become the established

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national faith of Persia, and the people were of all different persuasions.

Sâdee is certainly a beautiful writer in his own peculiar way. Though inferior to Hâfiz in lyric poetry, his works are much more voluminous and diversified; embracing all kinds of composition in prose and verse. Since his time, many of the literati of Persia have imitated his style and language, but none have succeeded in rivalling him. He has been termed a moralist; and to a certain degree may deserve the title: yet among his writings there are some abominations, in comparison with which, the worst parts of Juvenal and Petronius Arbiter would appear modest and decent.

Just beside the Sâdeeya, is a subterraneous vault, into which we descended by a flight of steps. This vault contains a deep square cistern of clear water, flowing from under the adjacent hill. The basin is full of fish, which appear to be quite tame, for some of them will come up to the surface, and take bits of bread from one's hand; a fact which I confess I did not believe in, till I had ocular demonstration of its truth. The fish are about the size of large trout, and being generally held sacred to the memory of Sâdee, are seldom caught or molested. The water is conveyed from this cistern, by a channel for some distance underground, after which the aqueduct opens on the surface of the plain, where it serves to turn one or two watermills, and thence flows

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on to fertilize the vale of Sheerauz. The stream is named the Aubi-Zengee.

The village of the Sâdeeya is a small but crowded collection of little houses, built of brick and mud, with flat roofs.

Following the brook of Aubi-Zengee, we came to the garden of Dil-Gushâ at the entrance of the valley containing the Sâdeeya. This was formerly a fine garden, but now the walls have been broken down, the grounds overrun with weeds, and the walks disfigured and destroyed. The Aubi-Zengee runs through the middle, and is divided into numerous channels, distributing water in many directions. The summer-house which stands in the centre, is little else than a ruin. It is divided in several apartments, the principal of which is an open hall having a tank, now dry, in the middle. The interior walls have been covered with paintings of war, hunting, and all manner of devices; but they are all so broken and damaged, that it is difficult to make out any of the subjects. It must have had a handsome, or at least showy, appearance when entire. Two or three derveeshes inhabit this ruinous building. We returned home by the Ispahan road, passing between the gardens of Baghi Now and Jehân Nemâ, where the road is walled on both sides. Near the city, we crossed a bridge leading over the dry bed of a river; and here is a village or suburb called Dihi Buzurgee. Beyond this, we passed the half-ruined mosque of Shah Mirza

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Hamza, once a handsome structure. The custom of allowing all buildings to fall into wrack and ruin, is universal in the East. No one will repair what his predecessor has built: he prefers, if he can afford it, building something new, which may bear his own name, and flatter his vanity. In this way, all great works of utility or beauty are allowed to tumble in ruins, when a very little care and expense might easily preserve them. The policy is a very short-sighted one—we have no reason to expect that a future generation will preserve our memorials, if we have no respect for those of a generation passed away.

The Ispahan gate, like the other portals of the city, has substantial towers on either side; and has moreover the national arms of Persia, the Lion and Sun, depicted over the doorway.*

Next morning, I went to see the Takhti Kajar, a summer palace situated on the slope of a hill, having a fine garden around it. It lies about a mile and a half east of the city; and was constructed by Fat,h Alee when governor of Sheerauz during his uncle's reign. A high brick wall encloses the grounds; the gateway of which, fronting the city, is inlaid with *káshee-káree* or lacquered tilework in blue and other colours.

* An order of these arms, the *sheer-u-khorsheed* (lion and sun) was devised in 1808, by Fat,h Alee Shah, to decorate foreign envoys and Europeans who had rendered important services to Persia. It is, I believe, never conferred on any Persian officials.

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The garden, which is very extensive, is laid out in long straight walks planted with chenârs and cypresses, between which paths, are perfect jungles of rosebushes and other flowers. I rather admire the Persian taste for straight walks; though the fashion is generally disliked by Europeans. When planted with tall trees closely ranged together, they present a fine vista.

The palace is approached by a flight of steps; and in front of it is a large tank of water, some seventy or eighty yards square, with a *jet d'eau* in the centre. A number of waterfowl were disporting on the surface of this miniature lake. On one side of the margin, lay a large boat, which, the gardeners told me, had been built at Bushire, for Hosein Khan late Governor of Fars; and with infinite difficulty conveyed over the rugged mountain road, lying between that seaport and Sheerauz. The late governor was fond of rowing about on the tank, in this boat; but it has been disused for a year or two, and is now out of repair. The gardeners were very civil, as I have hitherto found Persians to be, and willingly showed me over the place. At each of the four corners of the tank, stands a *kooshk* (kiosk or pavilion) of fantastic, but not inelegant, form — somewhat like the houses we see depicted on Chinese screens and dishes. These pavilions are in two stories, with open rooms below, and closed above.

Above the level of the tank, rise six terraces,

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one over another, forming hanging gardens, prettily laid out in narrow flower-beds with small *jets d'eau* in stone basins. The walls or perpendicular fronts of these terraces are ornamented with the lacquered *kâshee* tiles; and at all the corners stand small minarets covered with blue tilework. Upon the highest terrace stands the palace itself, which must be some hundreds of feet higher than the city. It is neither large nor commodious, but neat and tasteful, and (strange to say) in perfectly good repair. The front room is a *tâlâr* or open hall, ornamented with painting and gilding, portraits of Persian beauties and the like. Behind lies the *zenâna* or ladies' apartments, with a small plat of garden in front, surrounded with a high wall. The present governor of Fars comes hither occasionally in summer, for the sake of a cooler temperature than that of the plain — were I in his place, I think I would live here all the year round. From the front of the palace, one has an extensive view of the situation of Sheerauz.

From hence I went to see the Jehân Nemâ and Baghi Now, two of the finest gardens of Sheerauz, both lying close together, to the north of the city, with the Ispahan road passing between them. The Baghi Now, which lies on the west side of the road, was constructed in its present form, and its buildings erected, by one of Fat,h Alee Shah's numerous sons, about thirty years ago. This garden is extensive and well laid

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out: it contains three *imârets* or buildings, consisting of open halls and side rooms. The first of these, which is at the entrance facing the city, is a sort of outhouse for servants and guards, and contains nothing remarkable. The second, in the centre of the garden, has a fine *tâlâr* decorated with not less than six representations of his majesty Fat,h Alee Shah variously employed, as well as likenesses of several of his sons; all as large as life.

The largest painting represents the Shah in state receiving a very queer-looking European embassy, intended, as the keeper of the garden told me, for Sir John Malcolm and his suite. One would suppose that the painter's idea of English costume had been derived from the illustrations of Froissart's chronicles. On the roof, which is elaborately ornamented, I observed some tolerably well-executed portraits of Persian ladies. The front of the stone basement of this hall, bears sculpture in relief, in imitation of the ancient style, representing the amours of the fair Shireen with her royal admirer King Khosrow Perveez, and her humbler lover Ferhâd the sculptor—a subject which has employed the pen of many a poet. The third *imâret*, at the further end of the garden, stands on higher ground than the others, as the whole enclosure slopes downwards from the skirt of the hills towards the plain. It contains several rooms, in no way remarkable. The roof of one of the upper apart-

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ments is covered with a representation of the zodiac and other heavenly bodies, drawn in figures, in the same fashion as in our celestial maps. In front of this imâret is a large oblong cistern of stone, from whence the water flows down a *shur-shurak* or inclined plane of paved stonework, into a tank in the centre hall; and thence by similar conveyance, to the lower imâret. The garden is walled round, well planted, and in good order. I hear that the governor intends taking up his quarters here, during the ensuing summer.

The Jehân Nemâ garden was made by Kureem Khan, and lies a little way above the Hâfizeeya; surrounded with a wall and occupying about eight acres of ground. The principal building is over the gateway, at the entrance, and contains some upstair rooms, which must have been handsomely decorated, but are now sadly tarnished and dilapidated. The garden is laid out in avenues of cypress, chenâr and fruit trees, with numerous flowering shrubs; but is not kept in any good order. In the centre stands a picturesque summer-house, of a description common in Persia, and which is called a *Koolahi Feringee* or "Frank's hat," though its resemblance to any European article of headgear must be purely imaginary. It is a high polygonal building, containing a hall with four fine *ooroosees* of coloured glass, occupying all four sides, and a marble basin in the middle with a *jet d'eau*.

Returning to the city, I stopped for a few

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minutes to inspect the mosque of Shah Mirza Hamza, which lies on the east side of the road, near the Ispahan gate; and though I did not attempt to enter it, as this might be objected to, I found that I could perceive enough from the exterior; for in its present dilapidated condition one can see directly through it. This mosque was built by Kureem Khan, one of whose sons is buried in its precincts; and according to the accounts of former travellers, was a very fine structure. Now it is little better than a mere ruin—its large dome has disappeared, and the edifice is roofless. The walls surrounding the court are done in *tauk-nemá*, but wretchedly out of repair; and the whole court is cumbered with masses of fallen brickwork, and strewed with fragments of glazed *káshee* tiles.

The other gardens in the vicinity of Sheerauz are numerous, but do not merit any particular description. I have visited most of them. There is the Baghi Eelhanee, nearly a mile west of the Takhti Kajar, belonging to the chief of the wandering tribes of Fars—the Baghi Nauree or "pomegranate garden" adjacent to it—the Baghi Nargeel or "cocoanut garden," so called from its having once contained some cocoanut trees, brought by a merchant from India, as a great curiosity. They soon died, being unable to endure the climate of Sheerauz: the date, a much hardier palm, will not live here. The largest garden of all, is the Baghi Masjidi Burdee,

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commencing at a distance of about three miles west of the city, and extending several miles. Most of the vast quantity of fruit sold in the bazars of the city, is brought from this garden: as I was on my way thither, I saw numbers of donkies and mules on the road, each animal furnished with a pair of *loudeh* or huge panniers made of thin boards like open chests, slung across the packsaddle, for conveyance of fruit. At present, there are only winter grapes, and a few oranges and pomegranates, but in the autumn, this garden is a complete market.

The entire grounds of Masjidi Burdee are held in *tuyool* or fief, by Ferhâd Mirza, a brother of the prince of Fars; who derives his revenue therefrom, paying no tax to the state. The custom of the *tuyool* (vulgo *tiweel*) much resembles the feudal system of Europe. A village, plantation, or garden, is made over to a government functionary or other great man, who holds it as a vassal of the sovereign who may require his services when necessary. These *tuyool* tenures are very general throughout Persia; but the system of allodial tenure, or full and absolute ownership, without fealty to any superior, does not, as far as I can learn, exist. The holder of this extensive garden does not reside at Sheerauz, and the grounds are all rented out to different individuals in the city. The garden is divided by the broad bed of a river, which is now perfectly dry, but after the heavy rains, comes down in a torrent. This is the river

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which is bridged over near the Ispahan gate of the city. In old Chardin's time, the city stood on both sides of the stream; but now its dimensions are contracted, and it lies entirely on the southern side.

A little way outside of the Baghi Shah gate (the portal nearest to my lodging) lies the commencement of a large and fine garden and summer-house, undertaken by Hosein Khan, a late governor of Fars. The grounds were laid out, and the walls built; but on the sudden demise of Mahommed Shah, Hosein Khan was dismissed and obliged to quit Sheerauz; since when, the garden has remained in "statu quo," and is now beginning to fall into decay.

I have not yet visited some of the localities of note in the city, as well as various places in the neighbourhood worth seeing; and shall consequently defer all further description of Sheerauz and its environs to a future opportunity.

The climate is now very pleasant. There is frost at night, and thin ice on the pools in the morning, which melts before noon.* At midday the sun is warm, and the temperature like a spring day in England. At six o'clock in the morning, the thermometer stands at 30° out of doors. At noon it rises to 52° in the shade, and 94° exposed to the full heat of the sun. At eight o'clock at night, it has fallen to 36°. No snow

* December 1st.

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has as yet fallen on the plain or surrounding mountains. The air is remarkably dry and pure, like that of Upper Egypt. At sunset, it begins to feel chilly, and two hours after, it is very cold. The common way of warming apartments, is by means of a *mangal* or brazier full of burning charcoal, placed on the floor. The *mangal* resembles a polygonal tray, about four inches deep and from sixteen to twenty broad, standing on short feet. It is made of brass or copper, and lined in the inside with plaster. A flat shallow metal tray is commonly placed under it, to preserve the carpet from injury. A small coffee-pot is often kept simmering upon the mangal, for those who partake of this beverage, which is not generally appreciated by the Persians; and it is a common practice to place a quince upon the glowing charcoal, and allow it to burn, whereby the room is filled with a pleasant aroma. In very cold weather, a *koorsee* is made use of.* This is a square wooden frame, like a low table, covered with a thick ample quilt. The mangal is deposited underneath this frame, and the family seat themselves close round it, drawing the quilt over their knees, and enjoying the concentrated heat. Notwithstanding the apparently careless use of burning charcoal in the houses, fires are of very rare occurrence in Persian towns. In Constantinople and other Turkish towns, they seem,

* This is the *tandour* of Turkey, described by every traveller in that country.

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by all accounts, to be as frequent as in the cities of America.

The Persian costume consists of the following articles of attire—a *peerahun* or shirt, resembling a chemise without a collar — a pair of *zeer-jâmeh* or light, loose trousers, fastened by a running string round the waist — over these, the *arkhâlek* or under coat, and above that the *cabâ* or outer coat; both fitting close to the body as far as the waist, wide and loose below, and reaching down to the ankles. The sleeves of these coats, are open from the elbow, and may be buttoned down to the wrist, or left loose, at the pleasure of the wearer. Short socks, called *jooraub,* are worn on the feet, and high-heeled slippers; which latter articles are always taken off when about to enter a room. These slippers are made of *sâgheree* or shagreen, a kind of leather made from the thick skin of the back of a horse or ass, near the tail, and commonly dyed green. The heels are shod with iron. Shoes made in the European style are coming into fashion, and worn by many. A shawl is commonly worn round the waist; and the cap completes the costume. This cap is of black lambskin, nearly a foot and a half high, of conical form, and always pinched or folded in at the top. It is lined with calico, and has a stiffener of thin pasteboard within it, to keep it in shape. A small skullcap of cotton is worn under the cap, and changed every now and then, as it becomes dirty. A tolerably good cap will cost

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about fourteen *keroonees*, and a common one of rough black sheepskin may be had for two or three; while one of the finest sort, made of the delicate fur of Bokhara, will sell for seven or eight *tománs*.

The common notion that the fine Bokhara skin is obtained from the unborn lamb, is an erroneous one — the lamb, I am told, is never killed until at least a fortnight old. This species of lambskin is usually called in England, Astrakhan fur, but why, it would be difficult to say, as none of it comes from Astrakhan. The common people mostly wear a cap of brown felt, which costs a *keroonee*, and will last for many years. All Persians of every grade wear the cap, except some of the mercantile class, and men of law and religion, who adhere to the turban, considering it a more grave and becoming head-dress for such as practise weighty and important professions. A *moollah* wears a large turban of white muslin; and a *seiyid*, in whose veins runs the prophet's blood, a smaller turban of dark green stuff.

There is fully as much coquetry displayed in the mode of wearing the cap, as well as in its shape and material, as in the bonnet of any London belle; and the *kesheng* or Persian dandy is most particular in his selection and arrangement of this head-dress.

The Persians shave the crown and hind part of the head, leaving a tuft on the top, like the scalp-lock of an American savage, and hair on either

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side; which some keep closely clipped above the ears, and others wear in long masses of ringlets. Such as affect the beau, cultivate their love-locks, keeping them in full luxuriance and stiffly curled. To keep the hair in graceful order, they employ a mucilage of quince pips boiled; which, if I am not mistaken, is used in England for a similar purpose.

I have heard that some grave and reverend seniors have, at times, issued sundry remonstrances against this piece of vanity; and like the histriomastix Prynne, have endeavoured to persuade the rising generation of the "unloveliness" of such appendages as love-locks: but without success. A small ringlet is left, by some petit-maitres to stray over the forehead; a piece of ultra dandyism.

The Persians are very partial to a long and bushy beard; and this is always dyed, generally black, by a combination of *henna* and indigo, but sometimes deep orange by the use of *henna* alone. The tips of the fingers, palms, and soles of the feet are also stained in a bright orange hue, by the application of this plant, which is supposed to have some salutary effect on the skin.

The outer coat is commonly made of *kadak,* a stout cotton stuff; and in cold weather of broadcloth. The inner coat is usually of chintz. Silk is forbidden to Moslems, but many Persians pay little attention to the prohibition; while some evade it, by having a small quantity of

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cotton thread mixed with the silk in weaving; so that the cloth cannot be considered genuine silk. In the cold weather, a cloak is worn both indoors and out. This is almost invariably of the kind denominated a *joobba* — open in front, with long sleeves, wide and loose about the shoulders, and tight at the wrists. It is made of Russian or French broadcloth. The Arab cloak of camel's hair is also worn by many.

A new fashion in dress was introduced by the late shah, and is followed by most of the royal family, but by few if any others. This is the *nezâm* or uniform, consisting of a frockcoat, close-fitting trousers, a shirt with a collar, and a handkerchief or stock — all in European style. The Persian cap and cloak are worn in addition to this. The people here abominate all innovation, particularly European; and Prince Feerooz Mirza, the only man in Sheerauz who wears this attire, is privately pronounced to be a *fuzool* (a tomfool) and a *maskhera* (buffoon) for adopting it.

When a Persian goes out on horseback, he puts on a pair of *shalvâr* or wide cloth trousers, which inclose the skirts of the *arkhâlek* as well as the *zeer-jâmeh*, and fasten tight at the ankles, which are swathed round with the *mooch-peech*, a cloth band about four inches broad. The foot and leg are then thrust into a wide boot, generally made of red Bulghar leather. The skirts of the *cabâ* are tucked backwards, and the rider usually

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puts on a cloak, or a *kuleeja*, a riding jacket like a loose tunic without sleeves, sometimes lined with fur. When travelling any distance, he is always heavily armed.

Eastern costumes, like Eastern customs, are not supposed to be much liable to fluctuation of fashion: but Persia is an exception to the general rule. Here within the last two centuries, the fashion of dress has greatly altered. In the time of Shah Abbas, as old travellers have described and as old paintings show, the Persian costume was very different from the present mode — the dress was of gay colours, much ornamented and laced with gold, whereas it is now of dark sombre colours, perfectly plain and unadorned—the lambskin cap was unknown, and large showy turbans worn — beards were shaved, and moustaches allowed to to grow very long.* I prefer the present costume of Persia to that of Syria and Egypt, on account of its sober plainness; which in my opinion is in much better taste, than the bedizenment of tawdry gold lace, buttons and flashy colours, to which the Turks and Arabs are so partial.

Regarding the attire of Persian ladies, I shall say nothing at present, having seen nothing of it,

* Tavernier mentions that one of the king's porters had a double salary because he could tie the ends of his moustaches behind his neck. In these times, the Persians commonly shaved the chin, and ridiculed the Turks for their long beards: while now they wear beards of an amplitude which the Turks may envy.

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save the out-of-doors disguise of a blue mantle and white veil.

The only European, besides myself, now residing in Sheerauz, is a Swedish gentleman, a medical officer in the Shah's service, now attached to the establishment of the prince. There are fewer foreigners in this city, than in any place of a similar size I have ever visited. There are, I have heard, two Arabs, and one or two Affghans now here—not a single Turk or Indian. I believe this to be the case with all Persia. There is no inducement to tempt any stranger to set his foot in this wretched country; and the very few who enter it, for commercial or other purposes, stay no longer than is absolutely necessary for the transaction of their business, and then gladly hasten away.

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CHAP. XV.

Sheerauz. — Translations from the Odes of Háfiz.

Having promised to attempt a translation of a few of the verses of Hâfiz, I beg to offer the following dozen of odes; which, I hardly need say, profess to exhibit no more than a slight idea of the original, deprived of all beauty of verse and sentiment.

There is no great difficulty in translating from one European language into another; the manners, habits of thought and reasoning, and modes of education, are pretty similar among all civilized nations; and this must tend greatly to assimilate their tongues; so that anything written in English may also be intelligibly expressed in French, German or Spanish. On the other hand, the habits, education and ideas of an Asiatic, are so utterly unlike our's, that the difficulties besetting an intelligible version from a European into an oriental language — or *vice versá* — are often great, and sometimes nearly insuperable.*

* I have seen advertised in a London paper lately, an English version of the Makâmât-ul-Hariri; and certainly if a

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In works of poetry and imagination in particular, it is often no easy matter to achieve an elegant translation from one language into another, though bearing a close affinity — witness a French version of Shakespeare — and in regard to the generality of this branch of literature, I believe Cervantes to be in the right, when he compares a translation into another tongue, to looking at the back of a piece of tapestry, where one can trace an outline of the pattern, and see the different coloured threads of which it is composed, but can discern none of the beauty and elegance of the work. With this sensible remark, borrowed from "Don Quixote," I present the following selection from Hâfiz, by way of a specimen of the Persian *ghazal*, with all its unavoidable imperfections on its head.

readable translation of this work can be made, I believe there is no Oriental book which cannot be satisfactorily rendered in our tongue. This is an Arabic composition, which some Moslems even have ventured to pronounce fully equal, if not superior, in eloquence to the Koran itself! It is really an extraordinary performance, and shows to what a pitch of eloquence the Arabic language can be carried — but, at the same time, it is one of the most untranslateable books I ever perused. The Koran is also, properly speaking, untranslateable. In the original, it is a grand piece of eloquence; and what wretched stuff it appears in Sale's English translation — a version which, though not quite free from error, is, upon the whole, a good and faithful one.

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I.

This and the following ode are the two sculptured on the poet's tomb. I certainly should not otherwise have selected them, as they are two of the dullest and worst in his whole *deevan:* but they contain allusions flattering to Moslem pride, in the half mystic half pious strain in which they are composed. This ode occupies the centre of the marble slab.

Announce the happy tidings of union with Thee, that I may rise above this mortal existence. I am a bird of Paradise and I would fain soar above the snares of this world. Shouldst Thou, in thine infinite favour, call me thy true servant, I would gladly quit the paltry cares and ambitions of this transitory sphere.

O Lord, from the bounteous clouds of thy Grace, send down upon me a shower of the blessings of salvation, before I am borne away like dust before the wind.

Seat yourselves, my friends, at my tomb with wine and minstrelsy; so that perchance, at your mirth and melody, I may awake and spring up from the dead.

Though I am old and frail, do Thou for one night fold me in Thy embrace, that in the morning I shall rise from Thy side, with youthful vigour restored.

Arise and declare thyself, O type of all good; that Hâfiz may bid adieu to this life and this wretched world.

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II.

The following ode is inscribed round the edges of the preceding, and occupies the margin of the slab. It is in the same style of mystified religious sentiment:—

O my heart, be thou the servant of the Lord, the King of the universe, and be thyself a king. Seek to abide ever under the care and protection of the Almighty.

The enemies of the true faith may abound, but a thousand of them shall be reckoned as nothing; even though hosts of such hypocrites should cover the hills.

To-day, O Alee, we live by thy favour. In the world to come, be thou a witness in our behalf, by the souls of the holy Imâms.

He who bears no real friendship for Alee, is nought but an infidel, though he be the most rigid devotee and acute theologian of the age.

Do thou kiss the sepulchre of the eighth Imâm, the prince of the faith, Reza (i.e. contentment) and remain expectant on that sacred threshold.

O Hâfiz! choose thou the service of the Sovereign Lord, and go forward manfully in the path of rectitude.

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III.

The following ode I chose at random for my lot, while taking a *fâl* from the copy of the works of Hâfiz, kept at the tomb: —

The season of spring has arrived: endeavour now to be merry and gay while thou art able; for the roses will bloom again and again, after thou art laid under the sod.

I will not venture to advise thee with whom to associate, or in what way to hold revels — for all this thou well knowest, if thou art prudent and sensible.

The harp in its lively strains will instruct thee how thou shouldst act; come! and let this admonition produce its good effect, if thou art wise.

Cares and anxieties about worldly things, wear away one's life in vain; if you suffer yourself to be harassed, night and day, with such vexatious matters.

Behold! every green leaf thou seest in the meadow unfolds to thee a fresh volume of existence: it would be a pity that thou shouldst continue unmindful of the works of Providence.

Though the path which leads from hence to the bosom of our eternal Friend, be rugged and dangerous; still the journey is easy when one knoweth the desired goal.

O Hâfiz! if fortune be thy helping friend; thou wilt follow no pursuit save that great Object alone.

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IV.

The following is the poet's eulogy on his native city. If Sheerauz deserved one tithe of such commendation, it must have been a very different place in the days of Hâfiz, from what it is at the present time:—

Hail to Sheerauz and its incomparable site! O Lord, preserve it ever from decay. And the stream of Roknabad with its hundred tiny limpid pools, whose chrystal waters are enough to confer life immortal!

Between Jaaferabad and Mosella, the zephyr comes mingled with sweet fragrance.

Come then to Sheerauz! and there seek the grace of the Holy Spirit, among its sons who are endowed with all wisdom and perfections. For who has ever boasted of any foreign perfection there, without being at once put to the blush?

O breeze of the morn, give me intelligence, since thou knowest, of my beloved, charming and wayward as she is!— Should that charmer even seek to spill my heart's blood, O be it lawful to her as mother's milk. O God! waken me not from this sweet dream; for in these visions of her, I enjoy true delight.

Since thou didst dread separation O Hâfiz, why didst thou not take advantage of the hours of meeting?

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V.

A veritable "chanson à boire."

O cupbearer, fetch me a measure of wine: bring one or two flagons of the pure liquor.

Bring the right medicine for all the pains and troubles of love — namely the juice of the grape — for that is the true panacea for all ills that beset both the young and the old.

My fancy has become quite unruly: bring the bonds of potent wine, to confine the exuberance of my spirits.

Let me quench the inward fires that consume me, with a draught; so bring me the liquid fire — videlicet, the wine pure as limpid water. If the rose hath faded and gone, bid it go with a blessing — fetch in its stead, the good wine, fragrant as rosewater. Should the warbling of the ringdove be no longer heard, no matter: let us hear instead, the gurgling of the cups filled with generous wine.

Grieve not at the vicissitudes of fortune: if the fickle jade has deserted thee, let her go — list to the melody of harp and lute and forget her. I cannot behold my beloved one, save in my dreams — let me then have wine enough, for that encourages sleep. Albeit I am already intoxicated, let me have three or four cups more; that my senses may be completely drowned. I compare the wine to the bright sun, and the goblet to the pale moon: let sunshine illumine the expanse of the moon.

Give to Hâfiz one or two mighty goblets of the good liquor: bring the wine, whether to indulge in it be a sin or a virtue.

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VI.

This ode, we may suppose, was composed by the bard, when in that interesting condition vulgarly denominated "greetin fou:" or as the Piers Pennilesse of Nash expresseth it "maudlin drunke, as when a fellowe will weep for kindness in the midst of hys ale." Spiritual meaning it may have for aught I know; but I confess I am too obtuse to discover any:—

Last night I hearkened to the plaintive strains of the flute, played by a minstrel — may his heart be happy! — and the affecting melody made such an impression on my soul, that I was unable to contemplate anything without feelings of sympathy.

A fair cupbearer was at that time my companion, whose rosy cheeks and dark ringlets resembled the sun shining through a dull day in mid-winter. When she perceived me sinking into the melting mood, she kept filling up my cup with wine.

I exclaimed — O my auspicious cupbearer; you deliver me from all the sorrows of this wearisome existence, when you repeatedly fill the goblet full of generous liquor. May God protect thee from the miseries of ill fortune — may He reward thee with felicity in this world and the next!

When Hâfiz hath become fairly intoxicated, he cares not a barleycorn for the whole empire of the Cyruses.

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VII.

At early dawn, I walked forth into the garden to pluck a rose, when suddenly the plaintive voice of a nightingale fell on mine ear. The poor bird, like myself, was in love with the rose; and sick with the passion, warbled its complaints, filling the bowers with its song.

I wandered through the garden and meadows; and ever and anon, reflected on the position of the rose and the lovesick nightingale — for Philomel's tuneful wail had so affected my heart, that I felt excited with uncontrollable sympathy.

The rose hath withered and turned into a mere thorn, while the poor nightingale is plunged in grief. The one fades and changes, while the other remains constant and true.

Hâfiz! learn from this, to place no hopes of happiness, on the fickle wheel of fortune — for changeful fate exhibits a thousand ill turns, and scarce a single act of kindness.

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VIII.

It is a festal day, and the season of roses: cupbearer bring the wine—for who has ever seen the season of the rose ushered in without the accompaniment of the winecup?

My heart has been oppressed with superstitious qualms and prejudices: give me the wine O cupbearer, that I may free my breast from all such encumbrances.

The canting sophist, who yesterday was preaching abstinence to us revellers, might be seen to-day lying drunk, with all his austerity and sobriety cast to the winds.

The rose quickly fades away; O my friends why sit ye idle and negligent? Have ye lost all regard for music and a song; for fair friends and winecups? Make the most of the sweet rose during the few days it lasts, and be merry: and if ye claim to be true admirers of the fair, rejoice and enjoy yourselves with our charming cupbearers.

While quaffing the morning draught with our friends, hast thou not observed how beautiful appear the cheeks of the lovely cupbearer reflected in the full goblet?

In the banquet-hall of princes, what songs should the minstrel chant, in his mirth-inspiring melody, but these wild verses of Hâfiz.

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IX.

O Zephyr, shouldst thou chance to pass by the abode of my beloved, waft hither on thy wing to me, one gush of the fragrance of her perfumed ringlets. By her life! I vow to thee, I will gladly throw away my own life, could I but obtain from thee, a single message from her heart.

Perchance gentle gale, thou canst not obtain access to her presence; then bring me, at least, the smallest quantity of the dust that lies at her door, as a collyrium for mine eyes.

I am an importunate beggar, and I ardently seek an interview with her; but alas! when am I likely to behold her beauteous form and face, save in my dreams?

My heart, once exalted as the stately pine, and hard as its timber, now quivers and bends like the drooping willow, through hopeless love for the graceful form of my enchantress.

Though the object of my affections values me as a mere nothing, I would not sell a single hair of her tresses, to purchase a whole universe. Why then should I wish my heart liberated from the chains of her fascinations? Hâfiz is proud to reckon himself the humble slave of his mistress.

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X.

The sixth *ghazal* appears to have been composed by the bard when amiably tipsy: the following was probably written next morning while suffering from the consequent crop-sickness:—

This hermit's robe which I wear, were better pawned for a flask of good wine; and this unmeaning volume (the Koran to wit) were better drowned in an ocean of the right juice of the grape. Alas how have I wasted life! as oft as I take upon me to reflect, I must regret this; but when fallen into profligate society, as has been my lot, it is best to do as others do.

I cannot recount to the world at large, the true state of a devotee's heart and mind; or if I must confess the matter, let me describe it to the sound of the harp and lute.

As the starry sphere continues to revolve, unaided by any visible means, so let the world pass — my head shall be filled with the image of the dear cupbearer, and my hand with the brimming goblet.

Since prudence and foresight form no part of the profession of a vagabond like me; it is to be expected that I should carry hidden fires within my bosom, while my eyes overflow with tears. From an enchantress like thee, I cannot estrange my heart. If I must pine through unrequited love, let me sport with these twisted ringlets. [Here is a paronomasia or play on words which it is impossible to render in English.]

When thou art old and frail O Hâfiz, bid adieu to the tavern; but now while youth lasts, enjoy love and conviviality.

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XI.

I SPEAK sincerely, and I glory in what I now confess — I am the slave of all-powerful love; and free of all cares for this world and the next. I am a bird escaped from the bowers of Eden; what shall I say regarding the woes of separation, or how I fell into this vile worldly snare.

I was once an angel of light, and dwelt above in the bowers of Paradise; but the sin of Adam hath brought me low, and reduced me to this wretched sublunary abode. Yet, O my charmer, when I think on the spot where thou dwellest — the shade of the Tooba-tree, the fascinations of the celestial Hoories, the margin of the fountain of Elysium — all vanish from my recollection.

The tablet of my heart bears no impression save the graceful image of my adored: what can I do? Love my instructor has taught me no other lesson.

The pupils of thy bright eyes consume my heart's blood; be it so, but alas! why have I given up my heart, to one who is adored by all mankind.

No astrologer hath ever yet discovered my lucky star — O my Creator! for what destiny was I born in this world?

Wipe with thy curled tresses, the tears from the wet cheeks of Hâfiz, or otherwise he will gradually weep himself to death.

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XII.

Bring the wine O cupbearer, for the season of the rose has arrived, that we may again break our vows of abstinence among the rosebushes.

Exulting and joyous let us hasten to the meadow, and singing like nightingales, seat ourselves in the midst of rosy bowers.

Quaff a full goblet of wine in the midst of the garden; for true tokens of felicity have appeared with the coming of the roses.

The rose has indeed appeared on the plains, but be not thou unmindful of the fall of the leaf. Seek, while they are to be found, the rosebowers with a fair companion and good wine.

Hâfiz! dost thou like the nightingale, desire the company of the rose? then offer up thy life as a sacrifice in the dust of the path of Him who causeth the flower to blow.

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CHAP. XVI.

Description of the City of Sheerauz.

THE city of Sheerauz is one farsakh ($3\frac{3}{4}$ miles) in circumference; and is surrounded with a shabby looking wall of sun-dried bricks and mud; outside of which is a moat, nearly dry. The wall has small round towers at intervals; and at each of the gates, stand a couple of towers, more substantial than the others, built of burnt brick, with crenated tops, and ornamented with blue tilework. The burnt bricks of this country, are of a yellow colour, never red like ours; and the sun-dried or unburnt, are precisely of the same colour as the mud with which they are generally cemented together. A Persian brick is square-shaped and flat—larger in surface than ours, but thinner—and answers both purposes of a brick and a tile.

There are six gates to the city, which I have walked and ridden round several times. Going out by the gate of Baghi Shah (king's garden) and turning to the left hand, southwards, we come to the Kauzeroon gate, by which I first entered the city. Further on, is the gate of Shah

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Da,ee, facing due south, and opposite to this, is a large public burying-ground, called the *Dâr-us-salb* or "abode of annihilation." They do not permit any corpse to be brought into the city; though those who die in the city, may be interred within its walls — but most are buried outside.

In this cemetery there are three conspicuous buildings, erected over graves. One, on the east side of the road, leading to the gate, is the tomb of Shah Da,ee, son of Zein-ul-Abideen, the fourth *imaum* of the Sheeahs. Another is a new building, erected by a brother of the chief of police, whose son is there buried. The third is the resting-place of the *vazeer* of a late prince of Fars. There are numerous tombs of Eeliautees. Such as were men of distinguished prowess, commonly have an upright stone above the grave, with a figure carved on it, of a cavalier on horseback transfixing a lion, or some such device, indicatory of the warlike character of the deceased. Graves of poor people are only marked by a stone at the head and feet: while those of the better classes have a low structure of brick over them, with a slab of marble or other stone, having some inscription carved on it, lying horizontally above, or standing erect at the head. The grave of a Sheeah is always flat on the top; while in Soonnee countries, they are almost invariably made convex. A large public cemetery, such as this, is often poetically termed *shehri-khamooshoon* "the city of the silent."

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At the east corner of the walls, as we proceed round, stands at a little distance from the city, a high building of three stories, called the *Khâtooni-kiyâmet* or "lady of the resurrection;" having a cemetery round it, and a small village attached. Who this lady, with the singular name, was, I do not exactly know: as I have heard more than one account of her. It seems that she was a daughter of one of the holy Imaums. The building has had a fine cornice of lacquered tile-work on the outside, but most part is broken away.

Further on is the *kussâb-khoneh* gate, in front of which, at a few hundred yards' distance, is a small village of that name, which signifies "abode of butchers;" and here cattle are slaughtered and skinned, and then brought into the city, to market. Beyond this place, lies another little village called the *dubbâgh-khoneh* or "tanner's dwelling," where the hides of the cattle are converted into leather. To the north-east, lies the gate of Sâdee; whence a road leads direct to the Sâdeeya and Dil-Gushâ gardens: and on the north of the city is the Ispahan gate, which I have already mentioned. These gates are shut about an hour after sunset; and opened just before sunrise.

Sheerauz formerly possessed twelve gates, erected by Kureem Khan, when he surrounded the city with fortifications and walls; but when Agha Mahommed came to the throne, he pulled

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down most of the works of his predecessor—a piece of poor spite—and built new walls and portals, as they now stand. Sheerauz was first built in the seventy-fifth year of the Hegira, by Hojaj Ibn Yoosuff, the victorious Mahomedan general, who overran and subdued this part of the country: but some of its inhabitants assert its claim to far greater antiquity, and pretend that it was founded by Jemsheed. The area of the city, within the walls, is of an irregular shape; and the houses are for the most part, closely packed together; though some have large courtyards and gardens belonging to them. The entire number of houses is said to be about 5000, exclusive of ruins; and the population consists of 30,000 souls.

There are a good many Jews in Sheerauz. Numbers of this expatriated people are to be found in all the cities of Persia, where they have existed for many ages. Three centuries and a half before our Saviour's time, several colonies of Jews were planted on the banks of the Caspian, by Artaxerxes Ochus, who had carried them off from Judea: and when the last destruction of Jerusalem by the Saracens, compelled the greater portion of its inhabitants to flee for shelter into other countries, many of them found their way into the southern regions of Persia. There are more than 400 families of them, in this city. They all live in the same quarter; and their houses are distinguished by very low doorways; as if to

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render entrance difficult to anyone unaccustomed to go on his hands and knees. They exist in great poverty, and in perpetual dread of the Moslems, who hold them in utter contempt, and often treat them with much severity. It is a common rumour, that the Jews occasionally steal young Moslem children, in order to sacrifice them, at some of their occult ceremonies. A similar belief once prevailed in Europe; and served, as it does now in Persia, as a convenient excuse for any piece of cruelty practised on the miserable Israelites.

A singular incident occurred about a year ago, which will serve to illustrate the state of insecurity in which these unfortunate people dwell. A certain Rabbi had, for sundry misdeeds, been degraded and excommunicated by his brethren; and being desirous of revenge, he bribed a young Jew to bury secretly, under the floor of their synagogue, a dead dog, together with a stick, and a scrap of paper having the name of Mahommed written on it. This having been privately done; he next went and gave information to some Moslem acquaintances, that his people had of late, adopted the unhallowed practice of beating a dog to death in the synagogue, reviling it all the while, by the name of the prophet of Islâm, and then burying it on the spot: and that in consequence of his refusing to join in so detestable a ceremony, they had excommunicated him. Such a report as this, was quite enough to kindle a flame of indignation

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in every Moslem breast; and a party of the Faithful immediately repaired to the synagogue; where, on digging up the floor, evidence was found to substantiate the Rabbi's story. All Sheerauz was forthwith in an uproar—the moollahs pronounced the entire community of Jews to be *wájib-ul-katl*, "worthy of death"—and the fanatical populace voted for a general massacre—which design they would undoubtedly have carried into effect; had not the Governor, to whom intelligence of the tumult had been conveyed, arrived with a company of soldiers, to protect the unlucky Jews. As it was, some of their houses were broken open and plundered: the inmates being compelled to flee for their lives. After the mob had been, with some difficulty, pacified and dispersed; the affair was brought under investigation by the authorities; the result of which was that the Rabbi's trick was exposed; and that worthy, having been soundly bastinadoed, was compelled, in order to save his life, to turn Mahomedan. The youth whom he had hired to bury the dog, was also obliged to embrace *Islám*.

Armenians are now very few in Sheerauz. Their number does not comprise more than thirty individuals; men, women and children included. In former years, the Armenian population of this city comprised between 3000 and 4000 souls; but since trade and manufactures have decayed, they have gradually deserted it, for more eligible places. These Christians have never been con-

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temned and trampled on, like the Jews. They have always kept a certain position in society, and maintained some sort of respect, among the Mahomedan citizens.

As I before observed, there are scarcely any strangers—that is to say, persons not subjects of the Shah of Persia—in this city: perhaps not more than half a dozen individuals, myself included.

There are many blacks in Sheerauz. These are almost all slaves, who have been brought hither, or born here, of parents brought from Zanzibar. The slave trade has been lately abolished, and vessels found in the Persian Gulf with slaves on board, are liable to be confiscated. It is however impossible to prevent smuggling; and blacks are now occasionally landed at Bushire and the other ports, dressed as women and closely veiled; and thence conveyed up the country for sale. The buying and selling of slaves born in the country, or imported previous to the abolition of the trade, is perfectly legal. The price of a slave averages from 20 to 100 tomâns; and such as have been made eunuchs, are sometimes dearer. These blacks are all Mahomedans: they are used only as domestic servants, and treated with great kindness, as slaves generally are, in Mahomedan countries.

Of the Moslem population of the city, there is one class, namely the Lootees, deserving particular mention. The Lootees are the swell-mob

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of Persian towns; and in Sheerauz, this community of scoundrels is unfortunately very large indeed. The term *Lootee* has a pretty extensive application. Its original meaning is a very bad one, to which I cannot allude; but the name has been given to itinerant jugglers and buffoons; and eventually to the chevaliers d'industrie of the towns; a pretty numerous body throughout Persia. These villains have a kind of freemasonry among themselves, and their society includes not only those who live by their wits, such as thieves, robbers, pimps, gamblers, &c., but also a considerable number of the shopkeepers, artisans, and even some of the higher classes. They are a turbulent, insolent, mischievous and depraved set —always prepared for any species of outrage and crime — ready to join any faction or party contest — and prompt to take advantage of any disturbance that may arise. When the late Shah died, the whole country fell into a state of anarchy, and all government was, for a while, suspended. This always happens in Persia, on the death of the king, as it is not known who is likely to ascend the vacant throne; and there is every probability that there will be many competitors for the crown; so that, for months to come, the nation will be plunged in war and bloodshed. Such an event as this, is a perfect godsend to the Lootees: and on the occasion of Mahommed Shah's death, they rose in Sheerauz and plundered the city; breaking open the houses of the mer-

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chants and storekeepers, and committing every species of outrage. Most of the respectable inhabitants were obliged to pay large sums, in order that their property might not be destroyed. The government is too weak to suppress this association of scoundrels; but many of them are constantly punished for their various crimes.

Prince Feerooz Mirza, governor of Fars and resident in the city, has lately put to death several of them. Just before my arrival in Sheerauz, he beheaded five of them in one day; and a short time previous, he had one rascal blown from the mouth of a cannon, and made a *shekkeh* of another. In this latter mode of execution; the criminal is hung up by the heels, head downwards, from a ladder or between two posts, and the executioner hacks away with a sword, until the body is bisected lengthways, terminating at the head. The two several halves are then suspended on a camel, and paraded through the streets, for the edification of all beholders. When the *shekkeh* is to be inflicted in a merciful manner, the culprit's head is struck off, previous to bisecting the trunk. Blowing a man from the mouth of a gun, or in Persian phrase "making him the breath of a cannon," is a common punishment in all Moslem countries; and has sometimes been resorted to in British India, in serious cases of mutiny and conspiracy.

The community of Lootees is divided into two rival bands, called the Hyderee and the Niamatee,

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who are, to a certain extent, hostile to each other; though always ready to unite against any third party. What may have been the origin of these two sects, or whence they derive their names, is not well known; and I have heard various stories on the subject, not worth repeating—but I am told, the distinction exists not only in Sheerauz, but in every other Persian town. The sect to which a Lootee belongs, does not depend on his family or profession, but on the part of the town, in which he lives. One half of the *mehallas* (parishes or quarters) of Sheerauz are Hyderee, and the other half Niamatee: and should any Lootee happen to change his residence, to a quarter inhabited by the opposite sect, he is at once received into that sect, abandoning the party to which he formerly belonged. Some years ago, the two rival parties were wont to divert themselves by combating with stones, on the plain outside the city, every Friday afternoon; but these bickers were prohibited by Hosein Khan, when governor of Fars, and have not since been renewed. The existence of these Lootees is one of the curses under which all decent and orderly citizens labour. To extirpate them would be a herculean undertaking, which the Persian government has not energy to attempt, or probably power to execute. Besides this, they are privately countenanced by many of the nobles, who calculate upon their assistance, in the event of a rebellion or popular outbreak; and also by many

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of the magisterial authorities, who wink at their robberies and share in the booty they acquire.

The Vakeel's Bazar in the city, is a remarkably fine building. It consists of two long vaulted arcades, each nearly half a mile in length, intersecting each other so as to form a cross; having a rotunda in the centre, with a cistern of water, above which is a high platform, where the principal merchants meet to discuss their affairs. The whole bazar is excellently constructed of burnt brick: the roof is very lofty, and vaulted over, with skylights at intervals. It is said to contain as many as 1500 shops*, but these are not all occupied, and the display of merchandize is not very striking. This was erected by Kureem Khan, who when sovereign of Persia, never took the title of Shah; but modestly called himself *vakeel*, "agent or deputy." The bazar contains several caravansaries, leading off it; as well as the *zerrâb-khoneh* or mint, which I entered; but the day happening to be Friday, there was no one at work. Persian coins are very ugly. They are badly struck, so that sometimes only one half of the die is impressed on the coin. They are not milled at the edges, which are uneven and shapeless; and on this account, the coin is easily clipped and filed. A tomân which has been any

* This must be an exaggeration. The utmost extent of the bazar is not more than a mile; and although the caravansaries and courts leading off it, contain many shops, I hardly think so many could be crowded into such a space.

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time in circulation, is pretty sure to be light, and is then taken at a discount. The *tomân* is the only gold coin: those of the late coinage have the name and title of the Shah on one side, and the date and place of coinage on the other.* Silver *kerooneees* are of many kinds, most bearing an inscription similar to the tomân, but some have the Lion and Sun upon one side. The *pooli siyâh* or copper coins, are also of many sorts and impressions; some are made in imitation of the Bombay pice. Mints are established in all the larger towns of Persia. The metal of these coins, is very pure and good; the gold and silver containing less alloy than our money. It is a pity that they have not learned to stamp them better. The mint contained no apparatus for the purpose, except small anvils and hammers, of the most primitive description.

Besides this fine bazar, Kureem Khan built, within the city, a handsome mosque, a palace, a large public bath, and an *aub-ambâr* or reservoir, sufficient to supply all Sheerauz with water. The mosque is on one side of the bazar. It has a handsome front, covered with *kâshee-karee* or lacquered tilework; but what the inside may be like, I know not, as the Sheeahs do not permit

* When Tavernier visited Persia, two centuries ago, the *tomân* was worth more than 3*l*. Since then it has gradually diminished in size and value. When Sir J. Malcolm wrote his history of this country, 40 years ago, it was worth 1*l*. It is now worth about nine shillings.

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any Christian to enter their places of worship. The Bazari Now or "new bazar," lies at one end of the Vakeel's; and was built about thirty years ago, by the *vazeer* of the governor. It is in every respect, very inferior to the other. The Bazari Urdoo, or "camp bazar," lies near this, and is in no way remarkable: and beyond it is the Bazari Hâjee, which was once handsome, and contained a fine rotunda and dome; but is now sadly ruined. The shops in these bazars, are mere cells, open in front during the day, and closed with thick wooden shutters at night. A terrace about four feet high, runs in front of them all, and upon this the trader sits and looks out for customers. As is generally the case in the East, these shopkeepers have no fixed price for their goods, but demand what they please, or what they think their customer is likely to give. This system amounts to an absolute nuisance; as it is necessary to argue and haggle, when buying the merest trifle, unless one can make up his mind to pay what is first asked, which is commonly, three or four times as much as the thing is worth.

Taxes are levied on trades and professions, in the following manner: Every *şinf* (trade or art) has its head, an *oostâd* (chief or deacon of the craft) who has charge of the collection of the professional tax, and payment of the same to Government. The tax is not fixed upon separate individuals; but there is a settled amount pay-

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able by each several trade; and this amount is divided among the tradesmen, by a mutual agreement among themselves, termed *boonicha-bundee*, by which each man stipulates to pay so much, according to their several means and prospects. It not unfrequently happens that Government demands these taxes in advance; when finances are low and money required to meet expenses; and then the *oostâds* of the trades are called on to make up a certain sum, which is afterwards deducted from the amount of tax, when the proper time of payment comes round. This is called *musâ,eda* or "assistance;" and in this impoverished country, such assistance is often required, year after year. There is no house-tax in Sheerauz; but a *jiziya* or "poll-tax" is levied on the Jews, and was formerly collected from the Armenians likewise.

Near the Vakeel's bazar, stands the Baghi Vakeel; the palace and gardens of Kureem Khan—now terribly curtailed of their former beauty. The garden is partly paved with stone, and contains numerous plats of trees and flowers; with tanks and fountains of water. There are three buildings within its walls. One is a Koolahi Feringee, similar to the one in the Jehân Nemâ. Another is called the Imâreti Khorsheed or "palace of the sun," and consists of a few good rooms, ornamented in the usual style. Feerooz Mirza comes hither every morning, and sits for two or three hours; receiving the visits of functionaries,

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hearing complaints, and dispensing justice. The third, which is the largest edifice, is named the Imâreti Kâh or "tower-palace;" and was, in former days, inhabited by Kureem Khan himself. It stands upon a high basement of stone; the front of which is ornamented with sculpture, representing, in gigantic size, the ancient Persian heroes, whose deeds are chronicled in that famous epic, the Shah Nameh. Flights of steps lead up to the doors, and in the interior, there are numerous apartments, which must once have been very elegant, but are now going fast to wrack and ruin. An *â,eena-khoneh** or "glass chamber" is in tolerable repair; but all the rest of the rooms are in a state of decay. The whole garden and buildings have been much damaged and disfigured since Kureem Khan's time. A number of fine marble pillars have been carried off to Tehrân, by the present reigning family.

Sheerauz contains fifteen large mosques, and numerous smaller ones. As the people entertain strong objections to any person, not a Mahomedan, entering their mosques, I have not been in the inside of any. Externally, and I believe internally also, they are much the same in con-

* This is a room, the walls of which are entirely covered with looking-glass, the panes being joined together as closely as they can be fitted. It has a very brilliant appearance at night, when lamps are lighted, and the apartment appears to be of endless extent. This kind of chamber is not uncommon in palaces in India, where it is called a *sheesha-mahall*, signifying the same thing as its name in Persia.

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struction and appearance, as in other countries: that is to say, of square shape; with a court paved with stone, in front or around; a dome on the top; and four or six minarets. Mosques are supported chiefly by *mowkoofât* or endowments in money and lands, given or bequeathed by wealthy persons; and some of them are richly endowed. The functionaries attached to a mosque are,—the *mootuwullee* or custodian—the *kâzee* or judge, who among Moslems, is a clerical as well as a forensic officer — the *peesh-namâz* or leader in prayers — the *khateeb* who pronounces the sermon or oration on Fridays — one or two *moollahs* who give instruction in divinity, and expound the Koran — a *muezzin* who calls the faithful to prayers — a *moordeh-shoo* or washer of corpses, previous to burial — and a *jâroob-kesh* or sweeper, who keeps the floor of the building clean. The principal mosque in Sheerauz stands in the centre of the city. It was built by Atâbek Saad Zengee in A. D. 1226; and still retains its original title of Masjidi Now, or the New Mosque. Hard by, stands a famous Imaumzadeh; the tomb of Shah Cherâgh, son of the seventh imaum, Moosa Kâzim: surmounted by an enormous dome; the most conspicuous object in the city; and which strikes the eye of the traveller at a great distance. It is a place of great sanctity. Regarding the sacred character of the worthy here interred, and the miracles performed at his shrine, in the way of healing the sick &c., as many lies

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are told, as the venerable Bede has chronicled of the holy king Oswald of Northumbria.

Sheerauz boasts of ten colleges, the principal of which is the Madresa,e Khan. This consists of a large square court, surrounded by the building, divided in two stories of rooms. The whole interior is faced with *kâshee* tilework, in elegant patterns; but it is much out of repair, and evidently going fast to decay. Over the entrance, is a hall, where the chief moollah gives lectures. Students in college pay nothing for lodging and education, but provide their own meals. The colleges, like mosques, are maintained by *mowkoofât;* but much of these endowments, has been at times, embezzled, or appropriated by Government; and some of the colleges have sunk into the condition of mere schools, where little is taught, except simple elementary instruction. Sheerauz has been styled the *dâr-ul-ilm* or "abode of science," but it now little deserves the title. The usual studies in Persian colleges are, the Persian and Arabic languages, the Koran and commentaries upon it, theology, law, moral philosophy and logic. Of natural philosophy, geography, and general history, nothing is taught or known. Mathematics are but little studied, though they possess Euclid's Elements. The dry study of the Arabic language, is in general, held more in estimation and repute, than any other pursuit. The grammar of the Arabic is complicated and difficult, and their grammarians have

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endeavoured, with all their might, to make it more so. Volumes have been written on philological trifles and subtleties, which are calculated to perplex and confuse, rather than to assist and enlighten the student. Many confine their Arabic studies to these tedious, quibbling treatises; as if there was nothing else worthy of their attention.* Astronomy is studied on the Ptolemaic system, as their religion interferes with their adopting the more accurate system of Copernicus and Galileo. In fact, their astronomy has gradually merged into the absurdities of astrology; as the little of chemistry they ever knew, has degenerated into alchymy.

Schools are very numerous. The schoolboys pay, according to their parents' means, from one to fifteen keroonees a month. The children of the wealthy, are generally educated at home, by a tutor. In the schools, little is taught, but reading and writing. The boys practise the latter, upon a *lowh* or sheet of polished tin, upon which, the thick Persian ink lies as well as upon paper. This is washed clean daily, and answers the purpose of a slate.

The few attempts that have been made here, to introduce European science and enlightenment, (and within the last twenty years, two such attempts at least, have been proposed) have been

* The Persians possess no grammar of their own language; which they learn entirely by ear. The grammar of the Persian language is extremely simple.

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frustrated by the moollahs and Seiyids, the so-called pious men, and pastors of the populace; who entertain the deepest jealousy, of everything of this nature. When any such education has been offered; an outcry has forthwith been raised by these worthies, that the religion of the people is assailed, and all their interests and privileges, bodily and spiritual, subjected to imminent danger: and as they can always engage the canaille, and masses of ignorant turbulent people, on their side, they have had little difficulty in carrying their point. Some of the better informed Persians regret this circumstance; but their number is far too small to carry any weight with their prejudiced and fanatical fellow-citizens.

Pride, ignorance, and bigotry, are the leading characteristics of the class of moollahs. They are ignorant of everything save their own false religion, and erring, trivial sciences; but so self-sufficient, that they look upon all other knowledge as useless and heretical; and they cordially detest all who are not of their own views, or who will not submit to be ruled and guided by them. The Seiyids, or descendants of the prophet, are perhaps the worst of the pseudo-religious party. Among them, there are a few really well-informed and well disposed men: but the generality are a set of proud, ignorant, and thoroughly demoralized knaves. Yet the people regard them as sacred characters, although many of them lead, notoriously, the most infamous lives. In Persia,

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the title of *seiyid* is given to one whose father is a descendant of the prophet: while one, whose mother is of this noble stock, is usually styled *shereef*. The distinction is not always very accurately drawn: and in other Moslem countries, these titles are applied indiscriminately.

Persia is far behind Egypt in initiatory civilization. In Sheerauz, there is no school affording instruction in any useful science—no military, mechanical, or medical college—no hospital for the sick—no asylum for the insane, blind, or aged—nor any one benevolent or useful institution whatever—and the same remark will apply to every city in Persia. Cut off from intercourse with civilized nations, the Persians deem themselves the cleverest and wisest people in the world, and learn to regard all others with contempt. The *arg* or citadel is a lofty brick building, with towers at the corners; and looks more like a jail than the residence of a prince—for it is at present inhabited by Feerooz Mirza. Beside it, lies the Meidâni Taveela, an open square, usually occupied by the soldiery who garrison the city. Not far from this, is the Meidâni Nakkârakhoneh, or "military-band square," one side of which, adjoins the Vakeel's bazar. The Goomrook-khoneh or Custom-house, is an open place with rooms around, like a caravansary. I have now mentioned the principal places in the city; and I think I may assert that, with the exception of the Vakeel's bazar, which would be con-

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sidered a fine edifice in any town in Europe, Sheerauz contains not one building worth looking at.

The city is divided into ten *mehallas*, "parishes or wards," over each of which presides a *kedkhoda* or headman, an inferior magistrate, who has the supervision of all the people in his ward, settles disputes, and apprehends criminals, when required. The streets, or rather lanes (for they deserve not the name of streets) of Sheerauz, are incomparably ugly; presenting no object to the view, save a crowded row of dirty shops, open to the weather like booths at a fair: or else, a blank mud-plastered high wall, on both sides, with clumsy iron-knobbed doors at intervals, and no other apertures. Most of these lanes are exceedingly narrow, and unevenly paved with rough stones; so that riding or even walking along them, is by no means pleasant: and they are besides, at most times, in a very dirty state. The *sakkah-khonehs*, or public places for water, are mere niches in the wall, with a stone basin inside; not neatly built fountains, like those of Egyptian and Syrian towns. One also misses the coffee-houses, those haunts of sociality and small-talk, so common in the latter. There is not a single coffee-shop in Sheerauz, or, I believe, in any other Persian town: the public gardens and caravansaries serve as places for news and gossip. Persians drink very little coffee. Tea is much more fashionable; and this is usually drank

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very sweet, and with a squeeze of a lemon in it, instead of milk.

Like all Mahomedan towns I have visited, Sheerauz is a perfect labyrinth of dirty lanes and alleys. In the cities of Egypt and Syria, there is something picturesque in the large bow-windows, and quaintly carved lattices, of these narrow ways: but here, there is nothing but uniform ugliness. The contrast is, however, very striking, when one passes within a coarse wooden door situated in a bare mud wall, and enters by a short passage, into a prettily laid out court, with plats of flowers and fruit-trees, a cistern and *jet d'eau*, and a decorated house beyond. The interior of a Persian dwelling displays much taste and elegance; but not a particle of this is visible from the exterior. I should observe that in almost all of the lanes of Sheerauz, there are at intervals, passages under apartments thrown across the street, so as to connect the houses on either side together. This passage, called a *sâh-bât*, is sometimes not more than a few feet in length; but is occasionally a long, dark and dirty vault.

The manufactures of Sheerauz are but trifling in comparison with what they were, in former and more prosperous times. There were formerly, five hundred weavers' factories—now there are only ten; and these are employed merely in making a coarse white cotton stuff, called *kerbâs*. Carpets of a cheap common kind are made here;

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but all of the better sort, are brought from Yezd and Kerman. Earthenware and glass are manufactured in considerable quantity, but of a very plain and rude description—the latter includes only flagons of different sizes for holding wine, and bottles for the *kaleon* or Persian pipe. All the better kind of glass ware and cut crystal, is imported from Russia. In former years, a very pretty description of kaleon-bottle was made here, containing figures, flowers, &c. of coloured glass, in the interior; but the art of manufacturing these, appears to be now lost. I have seen one or two of these bottles, in private houses. The objects contained in the bottle, were much too large to be introduced at the embouchure; and it may be inferred that the exterior glass must have been blown over them.

Wine is a staple commodity of Sheerauz. Some kinds are really very good; and would doubtless be much better, if the manufacture was conducted more skilfully. There is no such thing as a cask or barrel in this country; and the wine is prepared and fermented in *khomras*, or large earthenware jars, which do not contain any very large quantity; and in consequence, the process of fermentation is not as perfect as it should be. The wines are both red and white—some is like light Madeira, and some sweet like Constantia. They are pure juice of the grape; for the Persians do not doctor or fortify their wines, as we do. The wine is sold in glass flagons of various sizes—the

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kurâba containing three *mans* weight, or nearly two gallons and a half; while the *bagalee* holds little more than a quart. It is sold chiefly by the Armenians, as it is considered disgraceful in a Moslem to trade in this liquor, although many of them do so privately; and nearly all drink it without much scruple. But few shawls are made in Sheerauz, and these of a very inferior quality. Better kinds are brought from Kerman; but the *tirmeh* or finest shawl-stuff is all imported from Cashmere. The seal-engravers of Sheerauz are very skilful in their art. Red cornelian is commonly employed for signet-rings; and upon this, the name and titles of the wearer, verses of the Koran, &c., are beautifully cut. The stones are generally set in silver rings; as strict Mahomedans object to gold. Some of the painters in this city, are no mean adepts; and if properly instructed in the science, would doubtless prove very respectable draughtsmen. As it is, they have no idea of perspective, distance, light or shade.

The Sheeahs do not entertain the same objection to pictures, that other Moslems have; and portraits, and other representations of the human figure are common among them. Most of the portraits I have seen, remind me of those by John Kay, the former draughtsman and caricaturist of Edinburgh: that is to say—the faces strikingly like; and the figures stiff, ill proportioned and badly drawn. A species of mosaic work, termed

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khâtemee, is much used in ornamenting boxes, mirrors and other nicknacks; and its manufacture is, I believe, peculiar to Sheerauz. Long thin strips of different coloured substances, arranged in neat patterns, are firmly cemented together in a mass, as thick as a man's leg; and from this mass, thin slices are cut off, polished, and veneered upon the different articles. Pen and ink cases, called *kalemdâns*, form another branch of workmanship, in which artists here excel. These are made in the shape of oblong drawers or cases, nine or ten inches long by an inch and a half broad, one fitting into another. The inner case contains a small metal inkbottle, with the reed-pens, and other implements; and the outer cover is prettily painted. They are formed of papier-maché, moulded upon an iron mandril; and sell for from one keroonee up to several tomâns, according to the painting and ornament. The enamellers who ornament the heads of kaleons, are also very skilful artificers, and their work is much prized throughout most parts of the East. The head or bowl of the kaleon, which contains the tobacco, consists of a cup of gold, silver, or other metal; open at the bottom, and having a wooden base fitted into the socket. This cup is commonly enamelled on the exterior; the interior being lined with stucco. Enamelling is nothing else than applying, by means of heat, a fine superficies of a vitreous substance, much akin to common glass, to a thin plate of metal.

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Fine enamel-work can be done only upon a surface of gold, the only metal which is not liable to be chemically altered by the oxide of the enamel, when the latter is in a state of fusion. The pattern is engraved upon the kaleon-head, and punched out in slight relief—then the vitrified matter, which is ground to an impalpable powder, and of all the colours required, is mixed with a little water, and laid on with an ordinary hair pencil. When the painting is dried, the head is put into the furnace, and kept there till the enamel melts down and adheres smoothly to the metal. This process requires great care; for if it is allowed to stand too long, or is heated too much, the colours will run together, and the device is spoiled: and if withdrawn too suddenly, so as to cool rapidly, the enamel will crack and fly. A finely enamelled gold kaleon-head, will cost forty or fifty tomâns or more. The devices usually chosen, are portraits of ladies, or other figures, surrounded by borders of flowers or of arabesque pattern; but an expert artist will copy anything with the greatest accuracy. Kaleon-heads of silver and copper are likewise enamelled; but the work is of a very inferior quality. Coarse and opaque enamels only are applied to these metals, and the finer colours cannot be used. A silver enamelled head will cost a tomân and a half, and upwards. Among other curiosities of this country, are spoons, called *káshuks*, cut out of wood, nearly as thin as paper; the long han-

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dles of which, are carved in a variety of patterns. These are made in numbers at Sabunât, a village some leagues distant from Sheerauz.

There are very few hawkers—or itinerant sellers of wares who cry their goods about the streets—in this city. The few who do so, sell pottage and other eatables, which they prepare and carry about hot. There are also some Jews who go about buying and selling old clothes (these Israelites are wonderfully like each other in tastes, pursuits, and appearance, all over the world), and a few individuals who hawk about cosmetics for females, buttons, needles, and other trifling ware.

The Sheerauzees attribute (and I doubt not, with justice) the great falling off of their city, in point of commerce and manufactures, to the mismanagement, tyranny, and rapacity of the numerous governors, who have lately ruled Fars.

The governor, who is generally of royal blood, is constantly changed—few remaining here longer than two or three years—and in that time, his only care is to fill his own pockets by oppressing the people in every possible way, to the ruination of their means and hopes. Affairs were in a better posture, twenty years ago, when Hosein Alee Mirza held the ruling power. He had governed Fars for many years; and took some little interest in the wellbeing of the people. Hosein Alee Mirza was a son of Fat,h Alee Shah, and on the death of that king in 1834; he, in an evil hour, became one of the numerous competi-

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tors for the throne. He had himself crowned at Sheerauz, as Hosein Shah, and caused coinage to be struck in his name. He next proceeded to levy an army, which was soon after knocked to pieces, by Sir Henry Bethune Lindesay at the head of the troops of the lawful heir to the throne.* He was then made prisoner at Sheerauz, and sent to Tehrân, where he fell sick and died. He had thirty sons; three of whom fled to England, where they were duly fêted, and subsequently pensioned. The others yielded at once to their cousin, and acknowledged him for their rightful king. About twenty of them are now living at Sheerauz; where they draw pensions from government, and spend their time in all manner of dissipation. Some time ago, they had a quarrel among themselves, which led to blood-

* Fat,h Alee Shah had declared Prince Mahommed to be his heir. This Prince, afterwards Mahommed Shah, was the eldest son of Abbas Mirza, the favourite son of Fat,h Alee Shah, and who died some time previous to the demise of his royal father. The Koran has made no provision for right of succession; and the will of a dying king, is generally disregarded by his numerous sons, brothers and other relatives; every one of whom, who can manage to get together an army of lootees and vagabonds, makes a scramble for the crown. The country is then plunged in all the horrors of a civil war, which continues till some one competitor gets the better of his rivals, and is seated on the throne. The new king then puts to death, blinds, mutilates, or incarcerates all his loving brothers, uncles and cousins, butchers their families and adherents, and confiscates their property. These salutary and necessary steps having been taken, the sovereignty is secured to him, and peace restored to the realm.

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shed; but the late governor put an end to the dispute, by causing some of the young gentlemen to be well bastinadoed.

The present governor, Feerooz Mirza, is not so severe with them: for a few days ago, one of these hopeful scions of royalty chose to murder an unfortunate man, in a drunken frolic; and the only punishment he has received, has been a private bastinado in the governor's presence, and subsequent confinement to his own house. The bastinado is the commonest mode of punishment in Persia. I know not whether it is, that because the soles of the feet may be considered an ignoble part, or on account of the frequency and universality of the punishment; but nobody cares about, or is the least ashamed of this, which we should consider a most degrading indignity. Every man in Persia, the Shah alone excepted, is liable to receive this chastisement. The Shah punishes his ministers, and anybody else he pleases—the general his soldiers—schoolmasters their boys—masters their servants—and magistrates offenders—by having them beaten on the soles of the feet, till sometimes, they are unable to walk for months afterwards. And no one is in the slightest degree disgraced thereby. The prime minister may get a beating one day, and an honorary reward the next! But a sense of shame, of any kind, forms no part of the Persian character. Their education and training teach them to be above, or below,

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all such scrupulous weakness, and to entertain a befitting contempt of disgrace.

The Sheerauzees have always been noted for bigotry; and this feeling has by no means diminished of late years. Morier, Malcolm, and others in former times, were admitted to the public baths, and allowed to inspect some of the shrines and sacred places. Now the baths even, are shut to a Christian, as strictly as the mosques; and I make use of one in the Armenian quarter. Notwithstanding the turbulent and insolent disposition, for which Sheerauzees are equally notorious, I must say that I have never met with any insult whatever, though I have walked all over the town in my English costume. I believe that if a Persian was to walk the streets of any town in Britain, in his national garb, he would attract more notice, and encounter more rudeness, in half an hour, than I have since my arrival here. Many of the better class of people are free from the bigotry and dislike to strangers, which the populace entertain; but the masses are completely under the thumb of their moollahs, who promote and foster this feeling, as much as possible. The title of *moollah*, it may be proper to remark, is conferred on all men of law and religion, tutors and schoolmasters, and indeed anyone who can read the Koran, whether understanding it or not. The power and influence of these people, taken as a body, is paramount in Persia; being in fact

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superior to that of the Shah himself. They are as thorough a curse to the country, as the Roman Catholic priests are to Ireland; and like them, their great object is to keep the people, as far as possible, in ignorance, darkness, and subjection.

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CHAP. XVII.

Sheerauz continued.—Its Environs.—Antiquities.—State of Learning.—Manners and Customs of the Natives.—Their Meanness and Falsehood.—Price of Provisions.

THERE are a few places, which I have visited, at some little distance from the city, which it would be improper to pass over unnoticed. Behind the gardens of Jehân Nemâ and Baghi Now, is the pass of Tengi Allah Akbar, a defile by which the Ispahan road passes through the range of hills, encompassing the northern side of the plain. At the entrance of this defile, is a guardhouse, built on both sides of the road, with a chamber above the gateway; and in this chamber is deposited a famous Koran of huge size, said to be seven *mans* in weight, in the handwriting of Sooltân Ibrahim, the grandson of Teimour Lung. The guards permitted me to go upstairs, to see this book, but begged that I would take my shoes off, on entering the room; with which request, I of course complied. The large volume lay on a kind of desk, surrounded by a wooden rail: and at my solicitation, a boy went within the rails and

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turned over the leaves for my inspection. A few of the leaves at the beginning and end were tattered, but the bulk of the volume was in good preservation; and its large characters very distinct and perfect. It is an admirable specimen of a prince's skill in caligraphy. The Persians consider it lucky to pass under a copy of their sacred book, when starting on a journey; and when a man leaves his house, with this intent, his father, mother, or any relative, generally holds a Koran over his head, as he goes out at the door. This simple ceremony, is supposed to ward off evils, and preserve the traveller from danger. On the north-west side of the road, near the guardhouse, stands the tomb of a Moslem saint, cut out in the rock; and near it, a piece of sculpture in relief, representing Fat,h Alee Shah seated smoking his kaleon, and two of his sons standing by him. Beside this, another tablet represents a man in the clutches of a lion, while Rustam (the Hercules of Persia) on horseback, transfixes the savage animal with an arrow. The figures are all larger than life. The small stream of Roknabad flows through the pass, and turns a watermill near the entrance.

Behind the Takhti Kajar, a little to the eastward, is a small hill projecting from the chain of mountains, named Baba Koohee; upon the top of which is a ruined building, like a little mosque. Here, it is said, Hâfiz was wont to resort and pray every Friday night (or as we would call it

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Thursday night) and consequently, the locality is a chosen spot for those who wish to obtain poetical or pious inspiration: though I believe, few come hither now, for that purpose. A little way below the ruin, is a terrace on the face of the limestone rock; on which is built a small dwelling, inhabited by a solitary derveesh; having in front of it a neat little garden, a few yards in extent, containing two or three chenârs and cedars, a vine, a few fruit trees, and a quantity of flowers, with a cistern of clear water. A walk up Baba Koohee is a favourite morning exercise with me. The derveesh is very civil, and I get a good deal of information from him, as he is well acquainted with everything hereabouts. There is a fine view of the city and plain from this pretty spot.

Near the Dil-Gushâ gardens and tomb of Sâdee, there rises a bleak rock at an angle of the mountain range, on the summit of which are the remains of a tower, said to have once formed part of an ancient castle, which covered the top of the rock. It is named Kala,e Bunder, and according to report, was a stronghold of one of the Sassanian kings. Close to the ruined tower, there is a well of immense depth, excavated in the rock. This well is of rectangular shape, about fifteen feet by twelve, and is said to be bottomless, like that of Carrisbroke castle in the Isle of Wight. A pebble dropped into it, may be heard reverberating until the sound is lost to the ear. To

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every stone I threw in, I counted seven percussions, the last of which was very indistinct. Whatever may be the actual depth of this well, and it is certainly very great, it must, in process of time, diminish; for every person who, for ages past, has visited it, has cast in a number of stones; of which there must needs be a large deposit at the bottom. It is said that in ancient times, ladies convicted of being unfaithful to their lords, were thrown into it; but, as my informant remarked, such a proceeding would never do now-a-days in Persia; for the well would soon be filled up, were it deep as the pit of *jehannem!* The existence of a castle and well upon this rock, tends in some measure to strengthen the supposition of the antiquity of Sheerauz. With a fortress to command the pass, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a city lay on the plain.

To the eastward of this, lies at the distance of a few miles, the salt lake, formerly mentioned; bounded on the north, by the Gushnagân mountains. About thirty miles off, in the same direction, is a very large salt lake, named the Sea of Bakhtegân, which is many farsakhs in extent. From both of these lakes, quantities of salt are brought, to supply the city, and all the country round. Mines of rock-salt are also common in many parts of Persia. Proceeding eastward from the Kala,e Bunder, along the foot of the range of mountains; at a distance of nearly five miles from Sheerauz, a low hill projects out into the

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plain, from the loftier chain; and on the top of this hill, are the remains of an ancient edifice, which has been styled by all former travellers, the Masjidi Mâderi Suleimân, or "mosque of Solomon's mother;" a name by which it is no longer known: for when I made enquiries regarding it, no one knew of any such place.* It is now universally called the Takhti Aboo Nasser, "throne or platform of Aboo Nasser," from a village of that name, situated on the plain near it. The hill is not so steep, but that one can ride up it, without difficulty; and on its summit, are three portals of stone, standing on three sides of a square of thirty-five feet, having human figures sculptured in relief, on the inside of the jambs. There has evidently been a fourth portal, which has now disappeared; and traces of a wall, are visible, extending between the gateways, so as to form an enclosure. This must have been a temple of some kind; but no record or tradition of it remains, that I can discover. The portals are nearly twelve feet high, consisting of sides and lintels, of hard marbly stone; and each side bears one human figure, as large as life, done in low relief. These figures are a good deal defaced: they represent men, probably priests, clad in long robes, holding some indistinct objects in their hands. The lintels have some tracery of leaves

* This name has been given to various places of antiquity in this country, the most remarkable of which lies to the north of Persepolis.

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or wreaths carved on them, but nearly obliterated.

Morier has recorded his opinion that these stones have been brought from Persepolis, after the destruction of that place, and put up here; and he is probably correct, as the different parts of the fabric, are not very well fitted together. The portions of the walls, connecting these portals, which existed when some former travellers visited the spot, have now disappeared, as well as the sculptured masses of stone, mentioned by Morier, which lay around the place. The neighbouring villagers have carried them off, to break up and build their garden walls with. South of this hill, lies the small village of Aboo Nasser, resembling a fortress. The houses are low and flat roofed; and a high mud wall surrounds them, forming a square, with turrets at the four corners. The river from Sheerauz, now dry, passes by this village, on its course to the salt lake where it empties itself, and on the opposite side of the channel, stands the garden belonging to the village, enclosed with a mud wall. Numerous villages are scattered over the plain of Sheerauz; and they are all walled like forts. Directly opposite to the hill where I stood, to the east, is a similar hill, detached from the range: and upon it, are the remains of an ancient castle, exhibiting portions of towers and very substantial walls, built of large blocks of stone. Descending the hill, I observed near the foot of it, a small

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clump of willow and ash trees, surrounding a *booka* or little building resembling a mosque in miniature. This is a holy spot, named Desti Khizr or "hand mark of Khizr," a celebrated prophet* ; but when or how he came hither, it is not easy to conjecture. A burying ground lies beside it.

Going on in a north-easterly direction, skirting the mountains for about a mile and a half, I reached another piece of antique remains, formerly known, according to the testimony of travellers, as Nakshi Rustam, or "sculptures of Rustam;" but now called Nakshi Burmedillek, from a fine stream of water, named the Burmedillek, at the source of which, these sculptures are situated. Rustam, it may not be irrelevant to observe, was a famous hero of ancient days, whose exploits are recorded in the immortal verses of the Shah Nameh; and many remains of other times, throughout Persia, have been named after him — among others, the celebrated Nakshi Rustam at Persepolis.

The Burmedillek issues from the base of a mass of rock, jutting out from one of the mountains;

* The prophet Khizr is supposed to be immortal; having on one occasion, drank of the waters of immortality, said to be situated in regions of darkness in a remote corner of the world. Some identify him with Enoch or Elijah; for it is by no means clear who he was, or when he flourished. He is supposed to perambulate the world, like the wandering Jew, and has occasionally appeared to different people. He is always clad in green, as his name in Arabic indicates.

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and there forms a pool, surrounded by swampy ground overgrown with willow bushes and tall reeds. In one corner, to the west side, and about ten feet above the pool, are three tablets or compartments, cut in the face of the rock, containing human figures, in relief, fully as large as life; and done much in the same style as those at Shapoor.

In order to approach these sculptures, I had to go round the swamp, and scramble over the skirt of the rock, which is principally composed of gray marble. The tablet to the right hand, or east side, contains one figure — that of a bearded man wearing a peaked bonnet, like a fool's cap, the peak projecting over in front; a tight tunic reaching to the knee, and a long kind of petticoat under it, extending to the feet. A belt goes round his waist, sustaining a long straight sword, on the hilt of which, his left hand rests, while his right hand is raised to a level with his face, the arm being slightly advanced. He stands nearly fronting the spectator, with his face turned towards his right shoulder. The centre tablet, which is a little elevated above the former, also contains one male figure, who turns his right side towards the spectator, and faces the one just described. He is clad in a similar tunic and petticoat, but wears on his head, the strange football-shaped headdress of the Sassanian princes; and his hair and beard are curled in stiff ringlets. His left hand is just visible above his girdle, and his right is raised to a level with his chin.

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Between his hands he holds something, apparently a roll of paper, but it is not very distinct. The forefinger of his right hand is extended, as if he was delivering a moral lecture to his neighbour. The western tablet is the largest, and contains two figures, a male and female, facing each other. The male, who is to the east of his companion, wears a tunic and petticoat, with a belt and straight sword, on the hilt of which his left hand rests, while in his right he holds out a flower, or something of the kind, to his female companion. He wears a peaked cap, with a long cape, reaching down the back of his neck; and has a collar or necklace round his throat. The lady is attired in a long gown, full of plaits and much wider than the gentlemen's garments, and a veil reaching down her back. She has a fillet round her head, tied in a large bow behind; and she extends her right hand to take the flower which the gentleman offers her. Her wrist has a bracelet on it. Her face is unfortunately quite obliterated; but those of the three males are tolerably distinct. Between the two figures in the last-mentioned tablet, there appear to be a few lines of some inscription, but whether it is decypherable or not, I am unable to state.

Morier has mentioned these sculptures as being worn and indistinct, so I was glad to find them so unexpectedly plain and in good preservation. The relief is nearly two inches high from the surface of the tablets; and the folds of the garments

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and other conspicuous points, more boldly chiselled. What they are intended to represent or commemorate, I have no idea; and am not aware that any person has attempted an explanation. A quantity of wild mint was growing about the foot of the rock; and a kind of moss called *leemuboo* or "the lemon scented" from its fragrant smell. Some Eeliauts had pitched their tents near this place, and their herds were pasturing where the herbage is nourished by the Burmedillek, as it flows into the centre of the valley. Near the sculptured rock, is an old burying-ground; and I noticed numerous caves in the mountains around. I rode back, directly across the valley; entering the city by the Sâdee gate. A great portion of the plain, particularly to the eastward, is cultivated with *zoorrat* or Indian corn, which seems to thrive well.

The mode of drawing water from wells, in common use here, is by that apparatus well known in India as the *mốt,h.* Before the mouth of the well, stand two posts or brick erections, with a trundle or wheel fastened between them near the top, and a roller going across lower down. The bucket is a large vessel, like a bag, made of hide, the mouth of which is kept open by a hoop, and the bottom terminates in a long narrow spout. To the mouth is attached a rope passing over the upper trundle; and another rope passing over the lower roller, is fastened to the spout. To these ropes is harnessed a bullock, which is trained

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to keep walking, backwards up and forwards down an inclined plane, dug for some yards in front of the well. As the animal goes backwards up the plane, the bucket descends into the well and fills with water; and is then drawn up, as the bullock walks forwards, with the spout doubled up, so that no water escapes: but when the mouth of the bucket arrives at the level of the trundle, the spout is straightened, and the whole contents are discharged through it into a trough or receptacle at the head of the well, whence the water flows in a channel wherever it may be directed. In the smaller wells, in private gardens, the water is commonly drawn up by means of a trundle, which a man turns with his feet, as he sits in a kind of chair in front: and as the bucket comes up, he empties it with his hands. This latter mode of drawing water is probably that alluded to by Moses, as having been commonly practised by the Israelites in Egypt. (Deuteronomy, xi. 10.) I have never seen either of the two kinds of wheel, so common in Egypt, and which we have misnamed Persian wheels. I believe these contrivances for drawing water, are quite unknown in this country.

On the summit of one of the mountains, bounding the vale of Sheerauz, is a hot spring, named the well of Alee, which I visited with a guide, one day lately. The mountain lies between the pass of Allah Akbar and the little valley where the Sâdeeya is situated. Passing the Sâdeeya, I

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was directed round the end of a row of hills, and there commenced the ascent, which is long and gradual, but nowhere steep, so that one may ride the whole way without difficulty or danger. On the summit, there is a low building divided in several rooms, all constructed in Saracenic arches. The roof of the chief apartment is supported on short squat pillars: and opposite to the door, a flight of stairs leads down under ground, to the hot spring. The stair, which is cut out of a hard marble rock, is close and confined, reminding me of the Egyptian catacombs; and the steam arising from the water, so thick and damp, that I had some difficulty in keeping the taper, I carried, alight. Two or three cells or chambers lead off the stair, and at the bottom is a vault with a cistern containing the spring. As I had neglected to bring a thermometer with me, I do not know what the temperature of the water may amount to, but I should think it must be considerably above 100°. A few trees stand in front of the building, which is now untenanted; though not long ago, two derveeshes inhabited it.

The fine view which this spot affords, well repays the trouble of coming up the mountains. On one side lies the whole plain of Sheerauz; and on the other, a wild and desolate tract of country, through which leads the northern route to Ispahan. On the walls of the *booka* or building, there are one or two inscriptions upon slabs of stone, but so worn and obliterated, that I could

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not make out when or by whom, the edifice was erected. All manner of imaginary virtues, are of course, attributed to this well; the production of which, was one of the thousands of benevolent miracles ascribed to the idol of the Sheeahs, Murteza Alee; who "par parenthese" was never here in his life. Some distance down the mountain, and just above the Haft Ten gardens, there is another hot well, said to have been produced by Mehdee, the twelfth and last of the *imaums*, whom the Sheeahs suppose to be still living in concealment: he must be very nearly a thousand years old! On my way back, I went along the crest of the mountain range, and descended by a narrow path, where I was obliged to lead my horse, upon the pass of Allah Akbar. On the brow of the hill overhanging the pass, there stands a *chârtauk* or domed roof supported on four columns; built, as my guide said, over the grave of one *peeri bundbâz* or "chief of the ropedancers," a famous mountebank of former times.

We have always hitherto maintained at Sheerauz, a British agent; namely a Persian in some way connected with our interests, to look after the few affairs which may concern our Government, or private individuals, subjects of the British crown. This functionary receives about 400 tomâns yearly; no great salary, but the duties are very trifling, and the influence connected with the situation by no means small. All intercourse between the Government of Fars, and

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British authorities at Tehrân or Bushire, passes through this agent's hands; and the protection of English government exempts him from all ill-treatment and interference of the Persian officials. The situation is at present vacant, the agent having been lately dismissed for bad conduct; and no one has yet been sent from the capital to supply his place.

I have been visited by two or three booksellers, who bring manuscripts and other books for sale. Finely executed manuscripts are rare and expensive, though cheaper here than in India; and it is not easy to procure any but the most common and well known works. I gave one man a list of about a dozen Persian and Arabic works, which I had never been able to procure in India: two or three of these were immediately brought me; but the others, he told me, he doubted his ability to obtain: some of them he had never seen or heard of before.

The art of caligraphy is carried by the Persians to the highest perfection, and they are allowed to be the best penmen in the East. Their beautiful character affords the greatest scope for a fine writer to display his skill—so different from our ugly, stiff, up hairstroke and down backstroke character, in which to make any writing look elegant, is almost impossible. To write really well, is here considered a great accomplishment; and it is a pretty sure way of making a livelihood. Many persons earn their subsistence by transcribing books, and a good copyist is well paid for

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his labour.* I have heard of a famous caligrapher, who lived at Ispahan in the last century; whose writing was so exquisitely beautiful, that he could obtain five tomâns for every line he transcribed! For the truth of this statement, I cannot vouch, but whether correct or otherwise, it will serve to show the estimation in which this elegant art is held.

Copies of the works of Persian authors, written in this country, are far superior to any transcribed in India. Independent of the handwriting being usually much better, they are always far more accurate. An Indian scribe seldom understands a word of the Persian book which he is copying; and consequently makes all sorts of blunders. Besides this, the Indian moonshees † or language masters, notwithstanding their pretension and conceit, are for the most part very indifferent scholars, and when they meet with a passage in a Persian author, which they are unable to comprehend, they make no scruple of altering the

* They are paid according to the number of *beits* in every page transcribed. A *beit* in poetry, is a single verse, or couple of lines: in prose, it is reckoned at every fifty letters written without vowel-points, or every forty letters with these points. The vowel-points are never used, except in the Korân. The expense of copying a book is thus estimated, by counting the letters in any single line in a prose work, the number of lines in any page, and the number of leaves in the book. In poems, the number of couplets in a page is counted. The remuneration of the copyist depends upon his skill and reputation.

† The word *moonshee* properly signifies a secretary or conductor of epistolary correspondence; but in India, it is often erroneously taken to signify a teacher of languages.

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original text, to suit their own fancy or limited knowledge. When a work thus garbled, is put into the hands of an ignorant copyist, one may imagine what a mutilated production will be the result of his labours. I have rarely seen a copy of any well known Persian work, written in India, which did not abound, in almost every page, with the grossest mistakes.

Printing presses have been established in Tehrân and Tabreez, and books are there published both in types and lithograph; but the execution is rather coarse; and in the latter style in particular, they by no means equal the productions of the Persian lithographic press in Bombay. Printing in types is not relished by Persians; the character being necessarily stiff and uncouth, and very displeasing to an eye accustomed to the flowing written hand, which can be very well imitated in lithograph.

Persian ink never loses its colour and lustre. I have in my possession some MSS. written more than four centuries ago—the paper has turned dingy and dark, but the writing is as clear and brilliant as if it had been executed yesterday. This ink, though not impaired by age, is easily injured by damp, and may be completely blotted out by a wet finger.

The paper used in this country for writing on, is very smooth and highly polished. Most of it is manufactured here, but a considerable quantity is also imported from Russia. In former times,

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a very fine thick paper was brought from Khânbâligh * (the old name for Pekin in China), said to have been made of silk; and upon this, most of the best old manuscripts are written; but none of this paper is now manufactured.

The writing is all executed with the *kalem* or reed, which admits of being cut to the finest or broadest point for large or small hands. The best reeds of this kind are brought from Shushter (the Shushan of Scripture) in Khuzistan. The good and bad qualities of a *kalem*, all begin with the letter *S*. It ought to be *sakht* (hard), *siyâh* (black), and *sangeen* (heavy)—and it should not be *subook* (light), *soorkh* (red), or *seffeed* (white).

The ornamenting and illuminating of MSS., is a distinct branch in the art of bookmaking, with which the scribe has nothing to do. This embellishment is performed by artists who make it their trade. Many books are full of pictures, neatly done in bright and durable colours, but drawn in utter defiance of all rules of perspective. Ornamented manuscripts have every page surrounded with a border, done in gold and colours; and the head of every chapter or section has a kind of tablature, executed in vivid colours and gilding, in a pattern like that of a shawl-border or Turkey carpet, called the *sari-lowh* or "top of

* The city of Khânbâligh, now called Pekin, was founded, or at least rebuilt by Kublai Khan after his conquest of northern China, about A. D. 1280. Marco Polo calls it Cambalu, and says that in magnificence, it surpassed every other city he had visited.

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the sheet." Great labour is bestowed on the decoration and binding of fine manuscripts. The boards are frequently made of papier maché, called *mokuwwa*, and painted like the *kalemdâns* I mentioned before, which are formed of the same substance.

There can be no doubt that printed and lithographed books, will on account of their cheapness, ere long, completely supersede manuscripts; and probably in another fifty years, the occupation of a *khooshnevees* or "fine scribe" will be gone, like that of the monks of old in Europe, whose illuminated missals and other manuscripts, are strikingly like Persian books.

Few individuals here possess large libraries; and their largest collections of books would appear but scanty in comparison with the ordinary private library of an English gentleman. The Persians have few books; but what they read, they read thoroughly, and can repeat much of by heart. The fashion of skimming over a book, so common with us, is unknown to them.

The Sheeahs, in general, have no objection to sell their holy Koran to an infidel. Among the books I have purchased here, is a diminutive bijou of a Koran, which might have suited a Lilliputian Moslem. The writing is singularly beautiful and clear, but so very minute as to require a magnifying glass to read it. All the vowel-points and diacritical marks are inserted, as is generally done in the Koran, for it is con-

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sidered tantamount to blasphemy to mispronounce a word in reading it. The size of each written page is two inches in height, and in breadth one inch and a quarter, and the little volume is just half an inch in thickness. The labour of transcribing so small a copy, must be very great, and exceedingly hurtful to the eyes. Mahomedans of the Soonnee sect will not dispose of a Koran to a Christian; nor will they allow him to handle or touch the sacred volume.

The Persians are eminently a poetical people; indeed their literature contains far more of poetry than anything else; and all ranks, high and low, are able to appreciate the beautiful compositions of their bards. There are some individuals about Sheerauz, unable to read or write, who can repeat by heart the whole of the odes of Hâfiz from beginning to end, besides a vast quantity of other verses.*

Shortly after my arrival at Sheerauz, four regiments of infantry arrived from Tehrân; two of which are to remain here, while the other two proceed to Bushire. The appearance of these warriors did not by any means impart to me a favourable impression of Persian soldiery or discipline. The men had generally a fine physique, and many of them would have looked well in any army; but as for their discipline, costume and accoutrements, Falstaff's ragged troop was a joke

* The odes of Hâfiz are about 600 in number: each containing from twelve to thirty-six lines.

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to them. They looked more like a gang of gipsies than any organized troops. Their uniforms (which were not uniform at all) consisted of cloth tunics, loose trowsers fastening just below the knee, boots or leathern gaiters, and caps of black sheepskin or brown felt. The tunics were of all shapes and colours; but reduced to a somewhat uniform hue, by dirt. They were armed in European style with muskets, bayonets, and the usual accoutrements; but their crossbelts were sadly in want of pipeclay, and their muskets looked as if they had never been cleaned or scoured since the day they were made—as they probably had not. The men walked with a careless step and slouching gait, and had none of the military appearance or smartness of well drilled soldiers. In fact they looked like caricatures of grenadiers. Yet these men make excellent soldiers, when properly disciplined, drilled, fed, and paid, as they sometimes have been, when superintended by British officers. The treatment of the army by the Persian government is abominable. The poor men frequently receive no pay for years together, and their rations are seldom regularly served out: on this account they are constantly obliged to rob and plunder the townsmen and villagers, like regular banditti, in order to keep body and soul together. The people all dread the troops, and hate the sight of them heartily. The officers never look after their men; neglecting their interests as completely as their drill. Their chief employment is to defraud

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them, embezzling as much of the poor fellows' pay and rations, as they can contrive to make away with; and in consequence, conniving at the robberies and outrages, which absolute want and hunger may induce them to commit.

The Shah's birthday is the seventh of the month Sefer, which this year fell on the 11th of December. On the night of that day (that is, the night of the day before) there was an illumination in the city, if a few paltry candles and lamps stuck in front of the shops in the bazars, can so be called. I walked to the Vakeel's bazar, which was partly lighted up by a number of small glimmering lamps. If properly illuminated, this bazar would have a splendid appearance. During the following day, all shops were shut and all business suspended, while the people amused themselves. The guns were fired, and a holiday kept. On this day, the Shah completed his twenty-first year.

The manner in which a Persian spends the day may be briefly noticed. He gets up before sunrise for the morning prayer; after which, he partakes of his *nashta*, a light refreshment, consisting of a cup of tea and a bit of bread or some such trifle. He then goes to his business, if he has any, and a little before noon, eats a substantial repast, called the *nahâr* or *châsht*; and after the midday prayer, generally takes a short nap. Some of the moollahs and strict disciplinarians sleep from eleven till noon, holding it more ortho-

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dox to take the *keiolola* or midday siesta, before the noon prayer. The business of the day is wound up with a heavy supper, called the *shâm* (vulgo *shoom*) which is served at eight or nine o'clock; and he goes to bed not long after.

A Persian repast has been so often described, that I can say little on the subject, that has not been said before. The company seat themselves in a row upon the layers of felt, ranged along the carpets; and the kaleons are handed round with tea or coffee. The servants then bring in the *aftâba*, a ewer shaped like a coffeepot with a long spout, and *lagan*, a metal basin with a strainer or false bottom in it; and pour water upon the right hand of every one present. The *sofra*, a long narrow tablecloth of printed chintz, is next laid before the party, and in front of each individual is placed a thin cake of bread, which answers the purpose of a plate. The meal is brought in upon large brass trays, termed *majmua*, each containing a variety of dishes, with china bowls of sherbet. In each bowl are floating one or two long slender wooden spoons, by means of which the sherbet is drank, for there are no tumblers or glasses. The host then pronounces the *bismillah* (in God's name) and the company bending forwards over the dishes, commence the repast. No conversation is carried on during the meal, every one being engaged in eating in silence. The bustle and clatter of an English dinner party, the loud conversation and boisterous

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mirth, would astound a Persian not a little. When all have satisfied their appetites, the host utters the *alhamdulillah* (God be praised), and the meal, which has lasted twenty minutes or half an hour, concludes. The ewer and basin again make their appearance, and go the round of the company; the tablecloth and trays are removed—kaleons are brought—and the party join in social conversation.

It is almost superfluous to remark that in these repasts, neither knives nor forks are used by the guests. The dressed meat is all conveniently cut in bits; and every one helps himself with the primitive implements, proverbially said to have been invented before forks. I must admit that it is a habit to which I cannot accommodate myself with any degree of satisfaction: though I can eat with my fingers when required, I dislike the practice, as much as I do that of sitting on the floor like a dog.

Visits are matters of ceremony here, as well as in other countries; and the mode of reception of a guest, is guided by strict rules of étiquette. If the visitor be a person of superior rank, the master of the house rises and hastens to meet and conduct him in; and after leading him up to the *sadr* or highest place, does not himself venture to sit down until his guest is seated. If his rank is eminent, or if he is in any way entitled to special honour, the host gives up the *sadr* to him, and seats himself at some distance lower

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down, leaving a *hareem* or vacant space between them.* To his equals, the host rises up, but need not move further, unless they happen to be intimate friends, in which case he runs to welcome them: to his inferiors, he does not rise, but merely acknowledges them by a slight inclination, and bids them sit down. The usual obeisance by way of salutation, is to place the right hand on the left breast, and bow the head. After the invariable salutation of peace, a variety of complimentary phrases pass between the host and his visitor, some of which polite expressions would sound oddly enough in English. The Persian mode of sitting down, is an item in their domestic habits, which I do not think I could ever acquire. I can seat myself easily enough in the Turkish fashion, which is like that of our tailors, with the legs crossed in front; but the Persian way, which is to kneel down on the thick felt, and then sit backwards upon one's heels, is to me, the most painful and uncomfortable posture, in which it is possible to be placed.

I have not previously described the furniture—that is, the carpeting—of a Persian room; and having frequently to allude to it, I may here endeavour to give some idea of these decorations. The floor is covered with a thin mat, over which is spread a large carpet covering the whole or

* The word *hareem* is Arabic, and signifies a sacred or forbidden place where no one should intrude. It is often taken to denote the ladies' apartments.

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most part of it. This carpet, if of fine quality, is called the *kâlee;* and if of ordinary coarse stuff, the *gileem.* Round the sides of this, are spread layers of doubled felt, called *nummud,* about three feet broad, upon which the people sit. This felt is thick, soft, and usually of a drab or brown colour, with a flower pattern. The *nummud* laid along the *sadr* or upper end of the apartment, opposite to the door, is termed the *sarandâz;* while the layers running down the sides of the room are named *bâreeka.* The least honourable place in the room, is that nearest the door; while the place of honour, is the *sadr* at the further side. The *sarandâz* is generally covered, in the cold weather, with a *harâmee* or coverlet of coloured cotton stuff; and in summer, with a *roofersh,* a similar article, but made of linen, which is cooler than cotton.

I should observe that in the reception of visitors, particularly strangers, the vaunted politeness of a Persian is not very conspicuous; for unless the guest knows exactly the amount of respect and attention he has a right to receive, he is pretty sure to be treated with less than he is entitled to: and if, in his ignorance or diffidence, he submits to be thus treated, he becomes, in a certain degree, contemptible in the eyes of all beholders. I have never witnessed or heard of any of this kind of rudeness (for it is nothing else) among any other Mahomedans. In all other Moslem communities which I have mixed with,

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a stranger is treated with every civility and attention due to his rank and position in society, without hesitation or reluctance; but here it seems to be the aim of the host to enhance his own dignity and self-importance, by endeavouring to pass as much slight and disrespect upon his guest, as he judges the latter likely to put up with. In a country where points of ceremony and etiquette are considered so important, it is necessary to be on one's guard against this conduct; as any submission to it, is certain to lower a man's dignity in the view of every one, even of his own servants. I was warned of this, by my landlord, who has been my adviser on such matters; and I have found that the proper way to ensure respect, is to adopt a firm and decided — almost a bullying manner, towards the company, on entering a house: as if resolved to exact as much attention as I can justly claim, and as much more as I can get them to concede to me. This demeanour will command success; and the point being gained, they are always civil and courteous in future.

As soon as the visitor is seated, the *kaleon* makes its appearance, together with coffee or tea, generally the latter. Conversation ensues, and after a while, the kaleon is brought again with more tea. A third kaleon is a signal for the visitor's departure, and this he usually calls for himself, while the host often presses him to stay a little longer. When he makes his exit, the host accom-

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panies him to the door of the house, if he be worthy of the honour; but with inferiors, this piece of ceremony, named *mushaiyat*, is of course omitted.

The kaleon is introduced on every occasion — at least twenty times in the course of the day — I do not think a Persian could live without it. They smoke but a few whiffs at a time, but very frequently; and the ladies, I am told, are quite as fond of their pipes, as the gentlemen. This pipe resembles the hookah of India, the smoke being drawn through a vessel of water. The tube through which the smoker inhales, is generally a wooden stalk, about a foot and a half long, which is changed when it becomes tainted with use: but instead of this, sometimes a long delicate snake-tube of thin leather, is employed. The Persians smoke pure tobacco, instead of the composition used in the Indian hookah. Their tobacco is of the finest quality, and smells like a perfume: it is pounded and mixed with a little water, put into the bowl quite damp, and some burning charcoal placed upon it. The Persian style of smoking is adopted by many Turks and Arabs; and a considerable quantity of tobacco is exported hence annually, by sea as well as land; but all of a very inferior quality, such as a Persian would not care to use.

The tobacco sold in the Levantine towns, as Sheerauz leaf, is nothing but the common coarse plant, grown in abundance at Kauzeroon and

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Gulpaigân. There is certainly something very agreeable in the conversation of the Persians. They have an easy, urbane politeness of manner, which makes a stranger feel quite at home with them. They will talk on any subject, without reserve, and have a strong *penchant* for punning and joking. After the punctilious, and often disagreeable, ceremony of reception has been gone through; and the stranger has secured for himself the proper degree of respect to which he is entitled; all reserve and formalities are discarded, and the company join in social intercourse, where all appear to be on an equal footing. Their demeanour affords a complete contrast to the stupid apathy and sullen reserve of most other Mahomedans. They are naturally inquisitive, and appear anxious to obtain information. I am surprised at the freedom and coolness with which they will converse and argue on religious topics. They seem partial to a discussion on religious belief, and will quietly listen to arguments which would fill any orthodox Soonnee with horror. They distinguish evidences of faith into two classes; *aklee* "according to reason," and *nuklee* "according to traditional history;" some of the latter of which Moslem arguments, are rather opposed to reason. There is no doubt that much of the Soofeeism or free-thinking prevalent in this land, proceeds from a spirit of inquiry inherent in so many of the inhabitants: though a great proportion of them (like other Mussulmans)

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will implicitly credit any absurdity which their pastors think fit to tell them.

Persians are always patient and courteous in argument: they never speak until their opponent has quite finished what he has to say; and are never guilty of the rudeness of interrupting any one. The violence, impatience, and ill temper, which English controversialists so frequently exhibit, are not to be witnessed in them. They ever manifest in dispute, a quiet, cool, sensible and gentlemanly deportment, which some of our stormy polemics would do well to take example by.

I have found them very inquisitive regarding our railways and steam vehicles; of which they have rather confused ideas, gathered from hearsay, and the few accounts, verbal or printed, that come in their way. It is not an easy matter to explain the principles of any of our great mechanical inventions to Persians, even should one happen to understand mechanics well—which I cannot pretend to—from a want of suitable terms of art. Although the Persian language abounds in technical terms applicable to Logic and Moral philosophy, there is necessarily a great deficiency of proper expressions for objects belonging to many branches of Natural philosophy, particularly mechanics; a science all but quite unknown in this country.

One disagreeable feature in Persian society, is their utter disregard of the truth. In point of

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mendacity and deceit, the Persians surpass all people I have met with. There is no believing a single word one hears—lying and subterfuge seem to come natural to them—and they are never at a loss for an excuse, when cross-questioned as to any thoroughly unbelievable tale. Persians of modern days are greatly changed from what their fire-worshipping predecessors were, in the time of Cyrus, when a strict adherence to veracity formed a characteristic of the nation. Modern Indians must also be not less altered from their ancestors; to whom, if we may credit Arrian, falsehood was unknown!

Another odious feature in their character, consequent on their neglect of the virtue of truth, is their utter want of honest principle, and total insensibility to disgrace of any kind. They are exceedingly rapacious and greedy: to gain money they will sacrifice their word and honour without scruple; and they have not the least sense of shame when detected in the most nefarious actions. The most ignominious punishments do not tend to degrade a man in the eyes of his fellows, or render him less respected. He retains his station in society, and is courted and visited quite as much as if he was the most virtuous character breathing; unless it should happen that he has become the object of royal indignation, which is often the case when he has possessions well worth confiscating, and then, whether guilty or innocent, he is, as a matter of course, deserted by all

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his acquaintances. Any person educated in a Christian country, where principles of honour are respected and appreciated, will be astonished at the excessive meanness, of which Persians of every rank and class, will be guilty for the sake of gain. Meanness is indeed common to all, from the highest to the lowest; and there is no crime, no despicable act, which they will not stoop to for the sake of personal advantage.

The Swedish medical officer, now at Sheerauz, informed me of a case in point, which is too characteristic to be passed over in silence. A short time ago, a noble of royal blood, resident here, fell very ill of fever; and after trying in vain the remedies of the Persian physicians, sent for him in great terror and tribulation, begging him to save his life if possible, and promising him a handsome recompense in the event of his effecting a cure. Doctor F. accordingly attended him with the greatest care and assiduity, through a long and dangerous illness, until he was fairly convalescent and able to take exercise. One day a servant of this nobleman conveyed to the doctor the unwelcome intelligence that his master had suddenly died in a paroxysm of fever: so here was an end of all hopes of recompense for the care and trouble he had taken. A few days afterwards, the doctor, being out at some gardens near the city, observed his quondam patient, the dead man, in renewed health and spirits, riding along with his companions! The story of his

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decease was nothing more than an ingenious and praiseworthy trick of this honourable scion of royalty, to cheat the physician, who had saved his life, out of his hard-earned fee!

With a very few exceptions, they are all alike in dissimulation, knavery and baseness. What virtue can be expected from a people, whose princes and great men, even the Shah himself, are unscrupulous and sordid to a degree that would shame the veriest pauper?

Notwithstanding their rapacity and eager pursuit after money, they are by no means niggardly, as far as their own personal gratification is concerned. I believe a real miser to be a rarer character in this country, than in Europe. A Persian loves to make a show with his wealth, however nefariously acquired; and generally spends his money freely in pomp, ostentation, and profligacy.

The necessaries of life are plentiful at Sheerauz, and reasonable in price. The following will give some idea of the cost of provisions, reckoned according to our weights and money:—

Mutton sells for eightpence a *man* of 7½ pounds; and lamb for one shilling, the same quantity. The best mutton is that of the *doombeh* or fat-tailed sheep. Beef, which is not held in much estimation by Persians, sixpence a *man*. Eggs, six for a penny. Wine, two shillings and sixpence a *man;* for liquids of every kind are sold by weight, not by measure. Inferior kinds of wine

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may be had for less. Bread, the best sort, three farthings a pound, and inferior sorts cheaper. This is considered very dear; for on account of the failure of rain, and the ravages of locusts last year, wheat has risen in price. At present, it sells for fourpence a *man;* and barley for 3½*d.*; whereas the ordinary price of wheat, in a favourable season, is 2½*d.* a *man*, and barley about 2*d.* Tea, of very indifferent quality, three shillings a pound. Lump sugar sixpence, and soft sugar threepence a pound. Rice sevenpence a *man.* Maust and fresh milk, each about ¾*d.* a pound. Clarified butter 5*d.* a pound. Fowls full grown 4*d.* each, and chickens about 2½*d.* There are no turkeys to be had: this bird is unknown in Persia, with the exception of a very few reared by the English at Bushire, and also, I believe, at Tehrân. Firewood ½*d.* per *man*, and charcoal 1¼*d.* Vegetables of the season, to be had for almost nothing. Grapes, now very dear as they are nearly finished, 2*d.* and 3*d.* per *man.* Tobacco, the best sort, 5*d.* the pound; inferior sorts 1½*d.* and 2*d.* Barley for horses, 3*d.* and 3½*d.* a *man*, and straw 1½*d.*; both considered dear. Tallow candles about ¾*d.* each, and wax not to be had. The Persians use castor oil for lamps: the seed of the palma christi is ground down, then boiled in water and the oil skimmed off. They also make use of a *peesooz* as it is termed, a kind of tall candelabrum of brass, with a small saucer on the top, which is filled with melted fat, and a

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wick stuck in it: it gives a feeble light. The prices of these articles vary at different seasons; and at the present time, most of them are dearer than in summer. In other parts of the country, some things are more expensive, and others cheaper than at Sheerauz.

By the last accounts from Bushire, it is reported that on the approach of the troops with the new governor, Sheikh Hosein was deserted by the greater number of his followers, and obliged to make his escape from the town. He put his guns, military stores, and other valuables on board a buggala, and sailed for the island of Carrack, where he now resides, with such of his followers as still adhere to him. He will probably endeavour to raise another force of Arabs, and make a fresh attempt to regain his position at Bushire. Meanwhile the new governor has been quietly installed in his place. Such are the reports, and they are probably true; though in a country like this, where newspapers exist not, and where absurd rumours ever abound, it is difficult to know what to believe. Events are often spoken of as certain and positive facts, which soon turn out to be pure invention, and destitute of the slightest foundation.

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CHAP. XVIII.

Sheerauz. — Crops and Produce. — Police. — Administration of Justice. — Peasantry. — Taxation. — Unhealthiness. — Diseases. — State of Medical Science.

After Christmas Day, there was a heavy fall of snow, the first I had seen for several years, which continued at intervals during some succeeding days. The Persians shovel the snow off the flat roofs of their houses, and the streets are, in consequence, nearly choked up. It is the common practice, after snow or rain, to roll the roof with a heavy stone cylinder, called the *bán-ghaltán* or "roof roller," so as to level and smooth the surface. The roof of a Persian house is very thick, and overlaid with a compost of mud and lime; not chunammed as in India. The cold is much increased; and ice formed on the pools, continues unmelted through the day.* The children do not appear to enjoy the frost, as our youngsters do at home. Slides and snowballs seem to be unknown in this part of the world. The mountain tops were covered with snow, long before any fell on

* January 10th, 1851.

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the plains; and it is reported that, a few days ago, an avalanche had fallen from Seeneh-Seffeed near Deshti Arjun, which overwhelmed and destroyed several muleteers with their beasts, who were going with fruit to Bushire.

The snow is stored in pits dug in the mountains, for use during the hot weather of summer and autumn. It congeals in frozen masses, and in this state keeps well all the year through. Ice creams are favourite delicacies with the Sheerauzees. These are not brought in glasses, as with us, but in slices like divisions of a cake. They are prepared in the following manner. The milk or cream is mixed with a little rose-water and powdered sugar, flavoured with cardamoms, and poured into a flat metal plate, covered over with another plate of the same dimensions. Snow mixed with saltpetre is packed round this vessel, and the whole buried under a mass of snow for eight or nine hours. Instead of cream, the juice of the orange or pomegranate may be used; and an excellent ice is made of *maust* (curdled milk) mixed with grape-treacle and flavoured with rose-water and spice.

Persian sweetmeats, of which I had a large supply sent me on Christmas and New Year's Day by my landlord's family, are good in their way, but extremely cloying. One of their favourite condiments is *bâklava*, made of pounded almonds, butter, and refined sugar, like the under crust of a bridecake. My host's mother brought me a

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huge cake of this pestilent compound, which she had made with her own hands; and was much disappointed when I protested my inability to eat the whole of it at once. Another very luscious stuff is made of *gezangabeen* (manna) worked into a thick paste with white of eggs, and flavoured with various spices: but they are all too rich and indigestible to be indulged in, save with great caution. Persian cookery is generally good; though rich and heavy dishes predominate. Boiling rice is an art in which the cooks here excel. Simple as this process may be supposed, it is by no means easy to perform in a proper manner—in Europe, it is not at all understood—and even in India, where rice is so much more generally used than in this country, the method of boiling it is not such as would please the fastidious and refined taste of a Persian. The following is a recipe from the dictation of my cook. Soak the rice in cold water for two hours, then put it into a pot of boiling water, and boil for half an hour, till the rice is just about to soften. Lift the pot off the fire, and pour all its contents into a *sumâk-pâloon.* This is a utensil, resembling a basin, made of metal, and perforated full of small holes; through which the water strains off, leaving the rice. Fresh water must then be poured into the *sumâk-pâloon* and the rice stirred round, while it strains off, so as to wash the rice perfectly clean and carry off the glutinous matter. A small quantity of *roughun* (clarified butter) is then put

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into the pot, with fresh water, and the rice poured back. Cover the pot and boil gently over a slow fire for two hours. Rice thus prepared is far superior to any I have ever seen elsewhere.

New Year's Day night happened this year to be a Mahomedan festival, entitled the *chehár-shamba,e sooree* or "Festival Wednesday," which is the night of the last Wednesday in the month Sefer.* On this night, people perambulate the streets with baskets of salt on their heads, calling "salt" with all their might, and distribute it in handfuls to every one they meet; generally receiving small coins in return. On the following day, the actual Wednesday, it is the custom to cook a kind of soup, called *áshi-rishta,* which they send to one another. I got a great bowl of this soup, which is a thick broth, not unlike hotch-potch, made with meat and vegetables, highly spiced, and mixed with vermicelli. The next day was the anniversary of the death of the prophet's grandson Imaum Hasan, who was poisoned by a treacherous woman: and the succeeding, the 29th of Sefer, the anniversary of the death of Mahommed himself. On these melancholy occasions,

* This festival is, of course, according to lunar time; and next year it will fall on the 21st of December, the Moslem lunar year being eleven days shorter than our solar year. Thursday night, with them, is Wednesday night with us; for according to the Mahomedan's notions, "the evening and the morning are the day," as they were accounted in the time of Moses. They set their watches at twelve, as the sun sets, and the first hour after, is one o'clock with them.

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the shops are all closed, and the people are supposed to lament and pray.

The plain of Sheerauz is, as I have already observed, for the most part cultivated. The uncultivated portions are either quite barren and stony, or covered with the *mahk* or wild liquorice plant, and the *khâri shootur* or camel's thorn. There are two harvests in the year. The *seifee* or summer crop, sown in summer and reaped in the end of autumn*, consists of *sheltook* (rice)—*pambeh* (cotton)—*zoorrat* (Indian corn) of which there are two kinds, *zoorrati bellâll* (maize) and *zoorrati dânareeza* (great millet, holcus sorgum)—*arzen* or *allum* (small millet, panicum italicum)—*nokhood* (cicer arietinum, known in India as *channa* or Bengal gram)—*adas* (lentils)—*mâshek* (a small vetch, phaseolus radiatus)—*beedanjeer* or *kennatoo* (the castor-oil plant, palma christi)—*koonjed* (sesamum)—and some garden vegetables. The *shatvee* or winter harvest, sown during October and November, and reaped from May till July, consists principally of *gendoom* (wheat) and *jow* (barley). Considerable quantities of fruit are produced in the gardens, but at the present season little is to be had, except grapes, which are daily becoming scarcer, oranges, and pomegranates. Apples and quinces are procurable in the market, but these are mostly brought from

* In India, the crop is usually named after the season of the year in which it is reaped—here, on the contrary, it is named after the season in which it is sown.

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Yezd, as well as a large kind of pear, called *abbassee*, not unlike a bergamot. Potatoes are not cultivated here, for, strange to say, the Persians do not relish this vegetable. I had some given me lately, which were brought from Ispahan. The common vegetables are pumkins of various kinds, *koombiza* (the round gourd)——*khiyárzeh* (the snake-gourd)—*bádenján* (egg-plant or brinjal)—*chookoondur* (beetroot)—*kallam* (cabbage)—*kallam shehree* (nolecole)—*káhoo* (lettuce)—*loobiya* (small kidney beans)—*shalgham* (turnip) and a few other greens.

There are not many kinds of trees to be seen in the gardens at Sheérauz, and scarcely any growing wild. The following are all that I have hitherto observed:—*sarv* (the cypress)—*káj* (pinaster or red cedar)—*chenár* (oriental plane)—*seffeedár* (white or Lombardy poplar)—*ahar* (ash)—*baloot* (oak)—*nárvend* (a kind of elm)—*afrágh* (a spreading tree like the sycamore)—*beed* (common willow)—*beed mu,allak* (weeping willow)—*beed mishk* (scented willow, a small kind with yellow flowers, known in Britain by the name of Palms) and the *koonar* (lote or cornel). The most common flowers are—*gool* (the rose) of which there are many kinds, but none now in flower. The marygold, called *hameesha-bahár* (ever in bloom) as it flowers at all seasons, even when snow is on the ground—*zoolfi-aroosoon* (bride's ringlets) which we call Love-lies-bleeding—*da,oodee* (chrysanthemum)

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—*khatmee* (hollyhock)—*jáferee* (African mary-gold)—*nergis* (narcissus)—and *lála,e abbassee* (marvel of Peru). Some of these are not in flower; and in spring and summer there are many others, which I have not noticed.

At the head of the police and government of the city, and entire province of Fars, is Prince Feerooz Mirza, brother to the late, and uncle to the present Shah.* I went to pay my respects to him after my arrival here. He is a rather good-looking young man, of about thirty, but looks older. He has held the office of *hákim* (governor) about ten months, and is tolerably well esteemed; but he possesses a full share of the grasping and avaricious spirit, for which all the members of the Kajar family, and his royal grandfather in particular, have been eminently distinguished. The *hákim*, who is governor and administrator of the common law, is assisted by a *vazeer* or minister, and has immediately under him, the *kelauntar* or mayor, and the *dároogha* or head of police. Every ward of the city has besides a *kedkhoda* or headman to superintend it. The office of *mohtesib* (superintendent of bazars and markets) has lately been abolished at Sheerauz, though no city ever required it

* The title of Mirza, when placed after a name, denotes Royal blood. When it precedes the name, it indicates nothing but a certain degree of respectability. Educated persons, scribes, accountants, secretaries, &c., usually prefix this title to their names.

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more. In each ward there is a *gazma* or night patrol. These policemen wear no particular uniform, but are all armed with *kaddáras* or straight swords, and carry cudgels besides. Three hours after sunset, no one is allowed to go about the streets unless he has a lantern with him *; and the patrol is empowered to take up all wanderers and suspicious characters, and convey them to the *saridam* or guardhouse, where, if they cannot give a satisfactory account of themselves to the *dároogha*, they are locked up. There is no police whatever, in the town, during the day; unless the *karávuls* or guards stationed at the city gates can be considered in this light.

All crimes, breaches of the peace, &c. are brought before the prince in his capacity of *hákimi oorf* or "judge of common law," or his deputies, the *vazeer* and *kelauntar*. Civil matters, including pleas, claims, disputes, &c., are settled by the Sheikh-ul-islâm (a title which might be rendered by "chief priest," could we use the phrase in reference to a people who, properly speaking, have no priests) who is *hákimi shera* or "judge of the written law;" and who has nothing to do with the investigation and punishment of violent crimes. The *shera* is the law derived from the Koran, and the *hadees* or pre-

* The lantern used in this country is similar to that of Egypt and Syria, consisting of two tin saucers connected by a long spiral wire, upon which is stretched a cover of white linen. When not in use, it shuts together like a box.

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cepts of the prophet and his companions: while the *oorf*, or common law, is that established by usage; or more correctly speaking, depends in a great measure on the will and pleasure of the governor. For although the Koran prescribes the mode of trial, and penalties for crimes, the *hâkimi oorf* always tries and punishes them at his own discretion; allowing himself to be guided neither by the Koran, nor by the dictates of humanity.

In civilized countries, a man is usually considered innocent, till proved to be guilty: but here, on the contrary, an accused party is always presumed to be guilty (especially if inferior in rank and wealth to his accuser) unless by some accident his innocence should appear; and even then, his release is very uncertain. In most other Mahomedan countries, there is some little show of equity and right kept up, in these proceedings, however easily the scales of justice may be weighed down with gold; witnesses are examined, and the Koran is appealed to as a rule: here, however, these useless solemnities are entirely dispensed with. Feerooz Mirza never summons or hears a single witness on either side. Should the accused party deny the charge, he is usually beaten unmercifully until he declares himself guilty, and then punished accordingly. It seldom happens that a person of rank or wealth is accused by any one of lower grade, unless in certain serious cases; and then he can

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generally avoid punishment, by privately paying a douceur to the prince. The power which all persons in authority possess, is very great, and often most iniquitously employed.

Not long ago, the *kedkhoda* of a village in the Germseer had quarrelled with a number of the villagers, and being desirous of wreaking vengeance upon them, he wrote to the Prince reporting these poor men to be robbers. The prince thereupon ordered that they should all be apprehended and forwarded to Sheerauz; and upon their arrival, without making the least inquiry into the subject of the report, and without giving them any opportunity of justifying themselves, or of saying a single word in their defence, he ordered that every one should have his right hand and left foot cut off. In vain did the miserable men protest their innocence, for I am assured that they were all perfectly guiltless of the charge alleged against them. They were reported by the headman of their village to be robbers—this was enough for the prince—and the sentence of punishment was carried into execution without delay.

A very few days ago, another specimen of justice emanated from the prince's tribunal, which I may be permitted to record. A murder was committed one night, at a drinking bout, where a villain of a *lootee* was stabbed by another of the party, and killed on the spot. The homicide, a good-looking boy of sixteen or seventeen, was, by

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the prince's command, taken into the Meidâni Nakkâra-khoneh next morning, where his stomach was ripped open by the executioner, and his head afterwards cut off. I could not but consider him hardly dealt with; for although he had no right to resent an insult, which was of a description that cannot be alluded to, so promptly and severely; yet the lootee so richly merited his fate, that a lighter penalty would have sufficed to expiate such justifiable chance-medley. When the boy was brought before Feerooz Mirza, he at once confessed the deed, and was about to relate the circumstances; but the prince, without listening to another word, ordered him to be taken and put to death immediately.

When I observed to a Persian acquaintance that I thought the sentence a hard one, he replied coolly, that if the prince had listened to the whole story, he would probably have let the homicide off scot-free; but when he heard the youth boldly avouch the deed, he "was pleased to be enraged," and the lad's destiny was unpropitious—a consolatory reflection, ever uppermost in a Moslem's mind when any misfortune has happened. There is a terrible promptitude of justice (God save the mark!) in this country; which may remind one of judicial proceedings, as represented on the stage in a melodrama, at home. No time is thrown away, in making inquiries into the merits of the case, or taking any superfluous trouble: but after the accusation, a

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confession of guilt is expected to follow, or is elicited with the bastinado; and then the sentence is given and carried into effect, all within a few minutes!

I have not made these remarks, or adduced the above instances, with any design of holding up Feerooz Mirza as a bad specimen of a Persian governor. On the contrary, I believe him to be rather a favourable specimen than otherwise. His mode of administering justice is essentially Persian, and the same fashion obtains in every tribunal in the country. He is an energetic magistrate, and knows well how to deal with the turbulent spirits of this deeply depraved city. He is said to be rather fond of bribes, but in this respect he is, by all accounts, no worse than every other official in Persia.

The Sheikh-ul-islâm, who is the chief *kázee* or civil judge, is appointed by the Shah; and in the large towns he has a subordinate *kázee* to assist him in his duties. The Mujtehids or leading men in religious matters, are, on account of their superior knowledge of the Koran, often consulted on knotty points. The power of life and death is vested in the Shah, and he grants this power to whom he pleases. Most of the *hákims* (governors) are authorized to put people to death, at their own discretion; but some can only punish by beating, mutilation, or imprisonment; and cannot inflict capital punishment, without first applying to the Shah for leave to do so.

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One of the leading characters in Sheerauz is the *kelauntar* or mayor, Mirza Alee Akbar, surnamed the Hâjee Kowâm. He has ever been a desperate intriguer, during the course of a long and adventurous career; and now possesses more influence in the city, and all the province of Fars, than the prince himself. He is a son of the well-known Hâjee Ibrahim who, by his intrigues and influence, contrived to place the Kajar family on the throne of Persia, after having treacherously betrayed and ruined his former patron, the heir of Kureem Khan. When Hâjee Ibrahim experienced the usual fate of king-makers, and was destroyed with all the rest of his family, by the monarch whom he had crowned, this son alone was spared: Mirza Alee Akbar was then an infant, and ill of the small-pox; so it is probable that his life was deemed not worth taking. In after life, he contrived to ingratiate himself with the government; and has long held a high position at Sheerauz. Being now an old man, one of his sons performs the duties of *kelauntar*. He is greatly feared and cordially detested by the people, whom he oppresses and fleeces without mercy; for a more thorough extortioner, and rapacious suckbribe, does not exist, even in Persia. He goes by the sobriquet of the *lootee-bâshee* or "chief of the lootees," and is notoriously the patron and protector of every thief and scoundrel in the city; sharing in their plunder as a fee for his countenance and protection, and

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commanding their services, whenever it is necessary to keep the populace, or particular individuals, in awe and subjection.

The land-tax, in this country, is part of the *máliyát* or revenue, considered the hereditary right of the crown. As Scott Waring has remarked, it is not easy to obtain any exact information as to the various modes in which this is levied, and from all I can learn, it differs considerably in divers parts of the country, and is managed more according to long standing custom, than by any prescribed rule. The finance of Persia is carried on chiefly by *baráts* or assignments granted by Government; but so little are these valued, that they are commonly at fifty per cent. discount, and the holder of a government *barát* rarely, if ever, gets it cashed to its full amount, even after waiting years for payment. Land-tax is paid partly in money and partly in produce; and when the Shah requires ready cash on an emergency, he directs that certain portions of the revenue shall be collected immediately in specie, and sent at once to the capital. This is termed *jeebi shahee*, or "Royal private purse." In most places, the tax on land is regulated according to the number of cattle kept for cultivation. The *mustowfee* (collector) and his subordinates ascertain how many oxen and other beasts each cultivator employs, and calculate therefrom the quantity of land he is able to bring under cultivation.

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In a good year, this tax is not heavy; but in bad seasons, it falls severely upon the cultivator; who is always besides obliged to pay fees and perquisites to the collector and his subordinates. Land belonging to the cultivator pays nominally one-fifth, but in reality nearly one-third of the value of its produce: while the *shahee* or crown lands, which belong to the king, are rented out at one half of their produce. In these *shahee* lands, the entire profit is divided between the king and the cultivator, while the latter bears all the expenses of tillage. In former times, by an old law, said to have been enacted by King Noushirvan, in the beginning of the seventh century, ten per cent. was deducted from the produce of all crown lands, to cover the expenses of reaping and thrashing, and the remainder divided between the king and cultivator.* Land belonging to private parties, pays annual tax whether cultivated or not. Landed property is hereditary; but if the tax be not regularly paid, it is liable to be seized by Government, and transferred to other parties.

A certain number of villages, with the lands attached to them, constitute a *bulook*, which is superintended by a *zâbit* or chief officer of revenue and police; and the taxes of each village are collected from the *kedkhoda* and peasants,

* It may be taken as a general rule that lands artificially watered, pay one-third — those dependent on rain, one-fifth — and crown lands one-half, to the State.

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by the *mustowfee* and servants under his directions, and forwarded to the treasury of the prince. When land is rented out by its owner, to another party to cultivate, the crop being gathered, a certain quantity of grain is deducted, sufficient for sowing the field for next year's crop; and the remainder is divided in three shares — one for the landlord, one for the cultivator, and one for the king's tax. The renter meanwhile bears the expense of tillage. When land has lain waste for some time, any person undertaking to bring it under cultivation will generally get it rent free for the first year; and where the land has always hitherto been waste, the person who clears and cultivates it becomes its owner, without further payment.

In addition to the *mâli-deevân* or land-tax paid to the State, there is another, generally very ample, source of revenue. This is the *peeshkesh* or gift to the crown, upon *now-rooz* or New Year's Day*, on which occasion, all the governors and leading men compliment his Majesty with large presents in money, sent from every part of the kingdom; while they, in turn, receive similar

* The *now-rooz* or New Year's Day, is an ancient Persian festival, still observed. It takes place when the sun enters Aries, namely on or about the 21st of March. This festival belongs to the old solar year, which was recognised by the fire-worshipping inhabitants of this country, before the introduction of the Mahomedan religion and lunar time.

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perquisites from all of their inferiors; and the burden of the whole rests on the shoulders of the lower classes in the towns, and peasantry in the country. Though called a voluntary present, this is, in reality, an arbitrary and oppressive tax. A *peeshkesh* or present, as it is called by courtesy, is also levied on other occasions — such as when a new governor, or other high functionary, arrives and takes charge of a town or province: and then it is expected that a handsome donation should be offered for his acceptance.

There is still another heavy impost on the labouring classes, which may be levied on them at any time. This consists of irregular taxes, denominated the *sádir awáriz*, raised whenever the king wants money to fit out an army, or on any other emergency, real or pretended; and much resembles the "benevolences and ship-money" which led to the downfal of our Charles I.

These irregular taxes admit of extortion of every kind. Orders are issued to the *mustowfees* of different districts to levy certain sums; and they are at liberty to extort them from the peasantry as they think fit: during which process, they never neglect their own pockets. In the irregular taxes, is included the *suyoorsaut* or supplies furnished to troops marching through the country — princes, ambassadors, and other great folks travelling with large escorts, &c. The villages through which they pass, are obliged to

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provide supplies for these parties, of every kind, both for man and beast; and as their numbers are frequently large, the contributions are necessarily heavy; particularly as the remorseless collectors take good care to extort from the poor villagers at least twice as much as is required. Some of our British envoys passing through this country, being aware of the oppression that accompanies the levying of *suyoorsaut*, have refused to receive these gratis supplies, at the hands of the government; and have insisted on paying for everything they required—for which forbearance, they have been considered egregious fools by the Persian nobles, who deem it perfectly fair and lawful to oppress the people, on every pretext, to the utmost of their ability.

Princes and great men travelling are a sad curse to the peasantry. Their rapacious followers usually plunder the villages as ruthlessly as an enemy or a horde of banditti could do; and the unhappy peasants not unfrequently flee at the approach of these terrible guests, and take refuge in the mountains, leaving their houses and fields at the mercy of the comers.

The passage of troops through the country is so great a scourge to the peasantry, that the commanders of Regiments are sometimes bribed by the villagers not to halt at their village, but to pass on to some other station. I have heard people say that they would prefer being pillaged by a band of Koord or Turkoman robbers, to

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being visited by a regiment of the Shah's soldiers.

The unfortunate peasants are thus greatly oppressed; indeed, a peasant is never safe from extortion, except when he actually possesses nothing; for there is no security of property, and to complain to any authority, is worse than useless. He therefore always pretends to be in the extremity of poverty and distress, if he is not really so; and when he saves any money, he anxiously conceals it, and professes to be destitute. All this is highly detrimental to the Government; if the Persians only knew enough of the first principles of Political Economy to be aware of the fact. As it is, they have not the least idea how the prosperity and wealth of a nation mainly depend on the general happiness, welfare, and security of property of the great mass of the people. The labouring classes having no encouragement, but on the contrary every discouragement to exertion and improvement, while they impoverish themselves, at the same time impoverish their oppressors.

Though the Persian peasantry are poor—so far as that they possess very little cash, and few valuables—their general condition is by no means as bad as might be supposed; and I suspect would contrast favourably with that of a great proportion of the same class in Europe. Famine seems to be unknown in this land—in a country so very thinly peopled, a small supply of food suffices to

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maintain the inhabitants, and this supply is easily raised. In a scanty population, besides, there is room for all, and work and means of living for all—individuals are not obliged to elbow, jostle and trample on one another for a livelihood; as they are often compelled to do in populous and civilized regions. The labourer in Persia may not have a coin in his pocket, but he has plenty to eat, he is not uncomfortably lodged, and he knows nothing of the agricultural distress, the starvation, and the frightful misery, of which we hear far too much in civilized Britain: for there is no doubt that notwithstanding our Poor-laws, our almshouses and charities, there exist as much real wretchedness, want, and destitution, in the British Isles, as in any other country in the whole world.

The tax on cattle, independent of those used in cultivation, varies much in different places. The greater proportion is levied on the Eeliauts, who are the chief graziers and cattle-breeders of Persia. In some places, as much as 15 keroonees are paid annually for every brood mare; 6 for every cow; 3 for an ass; and 1 for a sheep—while in others, they pay no more than 5 keroonees for a mare; 1 for a cow; 10 shahees for an ass, and 5 shahees for a sheep. The following is a common mode of settling this tax. The Government demands so many tomâns, as cattle-tax, from a village or tribe: and the *kedkhoda* of the village, or chief of the tribe, summons the

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people, and makes out a list of all the cattle belonging to them, called the *shakh-shimâree* or "reckoning of horns" (but all animals, whether horned or otherwise, are included) and imposes so much, on every animal, to make up the sum. The cattle-tax is sometimes paid in two instalments yearly, and sometimes all at once.

The Persian peasant does not run recklessly in debt, as the Indian ryot almost invariably does, to the full extent of his credit. When the Persian requires assistance, he borrows of his landlord, and repays when he gathers in his crop. The Indian mortgages his crop, before it has begun to ripen, to a bazar moneylender, who lends him a trifling sum at a ruinous rate of interest; and whatever his means may be, he is always plunged in debt. A man whose income is not ten rupees a month, will expend three or four hundred rupees, in the marriage-ceremony of his son; and to raise this sum, he incurs a debt that hampers him for the remainder of his life. This destructive folly is universal among Indian peasantry. Indeed, I believe that if the land-tax (heavy as it is) in India were at once abolished, and if Government did not take a farthing of revenue from the ryots, the actual condition of these infatuated ignorant creatures would not be in the least degree improved. They would only run deeper in debt, and be more at the mercy of their own grasping countrymen, who thrive by encouraging, to the utmost, this reckless folly.

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The entire revenue of the province of Fars, including taxes and customs by land and sea, amounts to a *krore* (*i. e.* 500,000) of tomâns.*

In the course of my rides in the neighbourhood of Sheerauz, I have frequently sought and obtained information, from the peasantry, regarding their agricultural labours, and I have always found them civil and obliging in this respect.

The culture of rice is here conducted in the following manner. The rice grains are first soaked with water in a pit, for ten days, in the beginning of the Ram †, that is to say, immediately after the 21st of March; then taken out and subjected to a process which they call *riveh*. This consists in laying the soaked rice out on level ground, squeezing it so as to express the water, and covering it over with grass, rubbish and mud, for ten days: after which it is spread on the surface of the ground, covered with manure, and watered for forty days. By this time, the grains have sprouted; and they are taken out severally, and planted on ridges, about the tenth day of

* In India, a *krore* is a hundred lacks, or ten millions — a lack being one hundred thousand — but in Persia, the *krore* is only five lacks, or five hundred thousand.

† When speaking of the various seasons, &c., the peasantry always use the names of the signs of the Zodiac, in which the sun appears to be. Thus, the Ram is from the 21st of March till the 19th of April — the Bull, from the 19th of April to the 20th May, and so on. These terms are equivalent to our solar months. The Mahomedan months, being lunar, vary in season every year.

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Gemini (May 30th), and the ground is kept well watered till harvest time, which takes place between the end of Virgo and the middle of Sagittarius (September 23 to December 6). One man, of whom I was making inquiries, told me of a curious circumstance regarding rice, which I never heard of before, and if true, is singular enough. By his account, if the rice be not properly watered, and the plant dries up, it will bear a grain different from rice, which they call *dujgâl:* and if this be afterwards sown, whatever care be taken of it, and however well it may be watered, it produces *dujgâl* and not rice. This grain is given to fowls; but none but the poorest classes of people eat it. I believe this *dujgâl* to be nothing more than withered rice; but it is singular that it should be productive of the same. I will not vouch for the truth of the statement, as little dependence can be placed on the word of any Persian.

The winter crop of wheat and barley is sown from the commencement of Libra till Sagittarius (September 23 to November 22), and reaped in Gemini (May and June). Preparatory to sowing, the ground is ploughed; and the seeds having been sown, the field is thoroughly moistened with water. When it begins to dry—or as they term it, when the soil has turned from *shool* (mud) to *gil* (thick clay), it is levelled with a board, drawn over it by oxen, the driver standing upon the board.

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Tobacco is a product for which Sheerauz has long been famous, but the best kind is brought hither from Jahrom in the Germseer, where it grows abundantly. A small quantity of the best quality is cultivated in some of the villages near Sheerauz; and it sells for four keroonees a *man*, which is more than treble the price of ordinary Persian tobacco. It is quite unlike any description of this herb produced in any other country: and has a sweet flavour with a highly aromatic smell. The best soil for tobacco is *shoora-zâr* or ground much impregnated with saltpetre, which is common in Persia; and this soil must be well ploughed and manured. The seed is sown in the early part of February, about forty days before *now-rooz*, in ridges; and heaps of bushes and rubbish piled over it. It is then watered every alternate day, until the young plant appears above ground, after which the watering process is not repeated oftener than once a week, and but little at a time bestowed. The plant is allowed to grow till two months after *now-rooz*, when it has attained the height of about ten inches; and the ground is then well moistened, to admit of its being easily pulled up by the root. It is then transplanted into other ground, which has been ploughed, manured, and laid out in ridges. The plants are inserted at a foot distant one from another, and well watered for three days; after which, no water is given for twenty days, when they droop and give signs of withering: they are

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then watered again, and this is repeated every ten days. The tops and superfluous leaves are lopped off, leaving eight or nine good leaves to each plant; and about Libra (latter part of September) they begin to ripen. The sign of ripening is the leaves becoming spotted, and the plant is now cut down, and allowed to lie till well dried. The leaves are stripped off; the stalk thrown away, and the leaves being moistened, are heaped together and pressed; the heaps being left to stand for a few days, during which time the tobacco ferments slightly. It is then packed in bags, and is ready for sale.

The most prevalent diseases among the people of Sheerauz and its environs, are fever, rheumatism and bowel-complaints. Fever prevails during the whole year, but is most general, as well as most dangerous, in the autumn, when it frequently proves fatal. It seems to owe its origin to local causes, the chief of which, is the filthy condition of the confined, ill-ventilated bazars and lanes of the city, by which the air is loaded with poisonous matter. Out of the city, there is no great decomposition of vegetable substance; but the whole country round is composed principally of limestone, and there is no doubt (as has often been found in India) that wherever limestone abounds, fever will prevail: for under the action of heat and wet, carbonic acid is eliminated from this, by which fever is generated. Diarrhœa and bowel-complaints are caused by the common

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practice of devouring quantities of unripe fruit, raw vegetables, and other indigestible substances. As regards epidemic diseases, smallpox and measles occur yearly, and sometimes prevail with much violence. Cholera makes its appearance every two or three years, and is occasionally very fatal, owing to the sad want of cleanliness in the streets. The present season is decidedly the most healthy time of the year. Medical science is at a very low ebb in this country. Persian physicians act upon the old exploded principles of the Greek medical authorities, mixed up with much nonsense of their own. In order to be successful, the doctor usually ministers to the superstitions of his patient, and charms of all sorts are quite as efficacious as drugs. I have dipped into a few of their medical works, which are amusing from their very absurdity. In cases of fever, they give the patient immense quantities of the juice of the water-melon, of which he is often obliged to swallow a gallon at a single dose!

On the 12th of December, I gained a companion in my exile in this heathen city, by the arrival of Mr. G., an agent of the Bible Society, now engaged in the arduous task of disseminating the Word of God, among the stiffnecked followers of the false prophet of Mecca—a task which, from the many adverse influences combining against it, must be a somewhat ungrateful, and, as far as visible results go, would appear a fruitless one: but it is not for us to expect immediate success

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to attend our labours of this nature—it is a Christian's duty to sow beside all waters, with faith in the efficacy of the Word; and leave the results to the will of the Author of Truth, who will in due time provide for the establishment of His kingdom.

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CHAP. XIX.

Of the Mahomedan Religion.

In a former journal, (never published) I attempted to give some account of the Mahomedan religion*; but as I am now in a country where that religion assumes a form somewhat different from that of Arabia and Egypt, I may be permitted to say something further regarding the subject, and excused if found recapitulating some circumstances which cannot easily be passed over.

Regarding the career of the false prophet himself, little need be said. We possess in English, several biographies of this extraordinary man; but none very complete. That which has lately

* It is to be regretted that we possess no good account of Sheeah tenets. At least I am not aware that we have any in the English language. Messrs. Sale, Lane, Herklots and others, have satisfactorily explained the religious principles of the Soonnee Mahomedans; but no one has afforded any exposition of the doctrine and observances of the other great sect. The account given by Sir John Malcolm in his History of Persia, is very concise and imperfect.

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appeared from the pen of Washington Irving has, I must confess, greatly disappointed me. It contains little or nothing that we have not already seen in print. Lives of Mahommed* in Persian and Arabic are numerous, and some of them very curious, being replete with anecdote and gossip. Our English authors might have borrowed more largely from them, with advantage. A very brief notice of the great pseudo-prophet's history will suffice. Mahommed was born at Mecca in or about A. D. 570, for the precise date is uncertain. His parents were poor, but of good family, being of the tribe of Koreish, held to be one of the noblest in Arabia, and lineally derived from Ishmael. The Persians say that at the moment of his birth, sundry prodigies occurred in their country: among others, the sacred fire of the Magi, which had continued burning for more than a thousand years, suddenly went out; and the palace of their monarch was shaken by a mighty earthquake. It is said that while the future prophet was yet an infant, he was visited by a party of angels, who threw him into a swoon, and opening his side, wrung out of his heart, the black drop of blood, which is supposed to be the

* I have spelt this name as most English writers spell it, though I admit that it is by no means accurate. The most correct way of writing it, I think would be "Muhammad," the first vowel to be pronounced as the "u" in "push," and the two latter very short, as in "America."

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fountain of all sinful thoughts and emotions*; and thus—

> "Whipt the offending Adam out of him
> Leaving his body as a Paradise
> T'envelope and contain celestial spirits."

Soon after Mahommed's birth, his father Abdullah died, and as he lost his mother in his sixth year, the care of his nurture devolved on his grandfather, and afterwards on his uncle Abu-Tâleb. His youth was chiefly spent in travel as an itinerant merchant. About his twenty-fifth year, he married Khadeeja, a wealthy widow, many years his senior; and thus obtaining some consideration and influence, in process of time his ambition became inflamed to a high pitch, and he conceived the project of founding a new religion, or at least, of bringing his countrymen round to one uniform faith. The Arabs at that time, were mostly idolaters, but many of them professed Judaism and Christianity, both corrupted to the worst degree. The original intention of Mahommed seems to have been, to abolish corruptions and to establish the worship of one God. In his fortieth year, he ventured to proclaim himself God's apostle, commissioned by the mouth of the angel Gabriel. This angel afterwards delivered into his hand, the Koran in

* Mahomedans believe that the Virgin Mary and her Son Jesus, were the only two persons ever born without this black drop of sinful blood.

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separate portions. He met with little success at first; and in the fifth year of his pretended mission, his own tribe the Koreish, who warmly opposed his efforts, obliged him to withdraw from Mecca. On his return after a while, he gave out the story of his famous *mirâj* or nocturnal journey to heaven, which was generally disbelieved, as indeed it well might be, for such a tissue of extravagancies and puerile absurdities was never woven into a tale before. His enemies again obliged him to flee, and he made his escape to Medina. This *hijra* or "flight," which occurred on July 16th, 622, is the epoch from whence Mahomedans date their years. Strict Moslems, in general, believe that Mahommed went bodily to heaven in the *mirâj;* but others less orthodox opine that his spirit travelled thither, but not his body. Bu Alee Seena (whom we call Avicenna) has stated his opinion that the prophet's spirit obtained a view of heaven, in a vision or trance*, while his body remained on earth; and he adds "whoever knoweth, will understand how and why he went, and whoever knoweth not, may look in vain for an explanation"—but Bu Alee Seena is regarded as little better than an infidel by the "rigidly righteous" of his nation and creed.†

* The idea is similar to the revelation mentioned by St. Paul — II Corinthians, xii. 1—5.

† Bu Alee Seena (a name which Europeans, with their usual accurate perception of Eastern nomenclature, have

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At Medina, Mahommed gained many proselytes; and finding his followers becoming very numerous, he suddenly gave out that he had God's command to propagate the true religion by the sword. He now assumed a sacerdotal, regal and military office; and encouraged his followers by assuring them that the angels would aid their arms, and promising them a fair division of plunder, including female captives, and salvation to all who fell in battle. As Gibbon has remarked, he was obliged to comply with the prejudices and passions of his followers, and to employ even the vices of mankind as the instruments of their salvation. His hostile enterprise was first directed against his own relatives, the Koreish, who were his bitterest enemies; and at the decisive battle of Beder, he completely routed them. He next attacked the numerous tribes of Jews, in different parts of the country, destroying many and compelling many more to embrace the new faith. His subsequent success was great. He made himself master of Arabia; and the kings of the neigh-

thought fit to torture into Avicenna) was born near Bokhara in A.D. 980. He was the admirable Crichton of the East. When only ten years old, he could repeat the Koran by heart; and before he was twenty, he was regarded as a prodigy of learning. His writings are very voluminous, comprehending science of every description. He has generally been considered unorthodox and heretical in his views: the fact was, he possessed far too much sound sense, knowledge and experience, to be a good Mussulman. He died at Hamadan in his fifty-sixth year, and his tomb is still shown there.

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bouring countries were invited to embrace *Islâm* at peril of their kingdoms being invaded and wrested from them. His victories were not unstained with cruelty and deceit: and the severity he exercised on the Arabian Jews in particular, was dreadful. Mahommed died at Medina in the eleventh year of the *hijra*, and sixty-third of his life. A fever was the immediate cause of his decease; but his constitution was much broken by poison, which had been administered to him nearly four years previously, by a Jewess.

Mahommed had married nine (or as some say twelve or thirteen) wives, although four only were allowed to his followers; and on this account, he has been censured by Christian writers, as a sensual and depraved character. It must, however, be observed that as long as Khadeeja, his first wife, lived, he had no other wife or concubine; and she died when he was fifty years old. We may therefore reasonably conclude, that he afterwards took these numerous wives, in hope of obtaining a son and successor (a hope doomed to be disappointed, for he left behind him only one daughter) and not for the mere gratification of sensuality. There can be no doubt but Mahommed greatly longed for male issue, to succeed him in his high position. By Khadeeja, he had eight children, who all died in infancy, excepting a daughter Fatima; and his expectations from all of his subsequent spouses and concubines, were never realised. The heaven

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described in his Koran is certainly sensual enough; but in this, he was obliged to consult the tastes and fancies of the semi-barbarous Arabs. Before his death, he was considered a sovereign, as well a chief of religion; and his successors were regarded in the light of princes and high pontiffs.

The immense success of the Mahomedans, soon after the pseudo-prophet's death, appears little short of miraculous. In the course of a few years the greater part of Asia was converted to *Islâm;* and the proselytes joining together formed a force which nothing could withstand—

> "A countless multitude
> Syrian, Moor, Saracen, Greek renegade
> Persian and Copt and Tartar, in one bond
> Of erring faith conjoined—strong in the youth
> And heat of zeal—a dreadful brotherhood."

All northern Africa was speedily overrun. Spain was subdued; and had not the Saracen conquests been checked in time by Charles Martel, at the decisive battle of Tours, fought in 732, France, and probably all Europe afterwards, would have been compelled to succumb to the Crescent. In all Mahomedan conquests, wherever and whenever they have been effected, the great and paramount object of the invaders has been to establish the religion of *Islâm.* Mosques in hundreds have arisen in every place over which their armies have passed, and the Koran has been left there as a legacy to guide future generations to salvation. How different has our policy

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been! Britain has always, in such cases, shown herself to be essentially irreligious—she has regarded the promotion of Christianity as a mere question of expediency, not as a duty of paramount importance — she has conquered, to establish markets for Birmingham and Manchester wares—and scrupulously refrained from interfering with the religious feelings and superstitions of other people, by any attempt to enlighten them with the truth of the Gospel of Christ; while she has obtained from them sources of wealth, with no sparing hand.

In consequence of these successes, the Arabs, from an unknown and barbarous race, became a civilized, polished and learned people; and their language, spreading far and wide, became the great vehicle of literature and science. The companions and immediate successors of Mahommed valued no knowledge save the Koran; but as the Moslem empire extended, they soon learned to appreciate letters, and became the most zealous patrons of learning of every kind.

Many of the early Moslems affected great poverty, parsimony, and self-denial in their domestic arrangements. Omar, the second successor of Mahommed, and Islâm's stoutest champion, lived on barley bread, and some of the chiefs and governors under him, kept no servants, baked their own bread, and washed their own clothes. All this was essentially false pride aping humility, and affected austerity under colour of great piety

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—a pride equally reprehensible with, and infinitely more silly than, that which impelled their successors to accumulate vast wealth, and indulge in extravagant luxury and magnificence.

Moslems believe that the Koran has existed from all eternity in the seventh heaven, and was delivered piecemeal by the angel Gabriel to Mahommed, on various occasions, during a period of twenty-three years. At the time of his death, the several portions of this wonderful scripture had not been collected or arranged. Abu-bekr, the first *khaleefa* or successor to the late impostor, first gathered these written revelations, and transcribed them in a single volume; and this was revised and remodelled by Othman the third *khaleefa*, who gave to the world the Koran in the form in which it now exists. Whatever may be the errors and absurdities of this book, it cannot be denied that it is certainly a magnificent piece of eloquence. Its language is considered a perfect miracle in itself, and not to be imitated by the ingenuity of man.* The book itself, in more than one place, challenges the world to produce anything equal to it. The Koran must not be judged by any translation into a European tongue: in all these versions, its eloquence and beauty of diction are entirely lost; and it possesses little other merit, for independent of these,

* As I have before stated, there exists at least one Arabic composition considered equal, if not superior, to the Koran in eloquence; but no strict Mussulman will admit this.

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it is little better than an incoherent rhapsody. Its historical portion is particularly confused, and without the aid of commentaries and collateral history, it would be difficult to make any connected meaning out of it. The style of this wonderful book may be considered as a kind of poetical prose; a style by no means uncommon among Arabian compositions. To the Mussulman, the Koran is much what the Pentateuch was to the Hebrew in former days, affording law as well as gospel, and precepts to direct and govern almost every action and affair of life, trifling as well as important. Who the real author of the Koran was, cannot now be guessed: for Mahommed, though probably by no means as ignorant as he pretended to be, was not a man of letters, and could not have composed so fine a piece of eloquence. It is supposed that Salmân the renegade Jew (whom I have mentioned in a former letter), two Christians, and some others, united in fabricating this extraordinary work.

The religion established by Mahommed is termed *Islâm* (signifying safety or salvation) and comprises the two essentials, *eemân* (implicit faith) and *deen* (practical religion). Five points are insisted on, namely — Belief in God and Mahommed his apostle — Prayer — Almsgiving — Fasting during the month of Ramazân — Pilgrimage to Mecca. The first of these belongs to *eemân;* the latter four to *deen.*

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Faith includes implicit belief in the following articles —

Firstly — In one God, who created all things from nothing; who is sovereign Arbiter and Ruler of the universe; who begets not and is not begotten; and who is alone and indivisible — so that to credit a Trinity or a Son of God, is a deadly error.

Secondly — In the angels, who are formed of pure light; who are true believers; who are of no sex, and beget not nor are begotten; who are impeccable, and have no carnal propensities, neither eating, drinking, nor sleeping. The Genii, it must be observed, are an inferior class of beings. They were created of fire: some of them are believers and some infidels; they are peccable, and are of both sexes, propagating their species, and subject to many carnal inclinations. Man, it is supposed, was formed of the four elements—the red clay of which Adam was made, being a kneaded compound of earth, air, water and fire.

Thirdly — In God's apostles, namely the prophets, of whom Adam was the first and Mahommed the last that has been and shall be: who are elect of their Maker, free from all deadly sin, and are all upholders of *Islâm* or the true religion, which has been in various ways imparted.*

* Some say that from the creation of the world, up to Mahommed's time, there have been not less than 124,000 prophets! Written revelations were imparted to Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus and Mahommed.

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Fourthly — In God's revelations by sacred writings committed to the prophets. These have been very numerous: but the Koran, which is the last that has been and shall be, abrogates all others. I may here remark, that Mahomedans regard our Scriptures as spurious. They hold that the *injeel* or Gospel of Christ was carried back to heaven; and that that which we possess, is a garbled fabrication containing very little of God's word. Mahommed forbade his followers to copy or read the book of the Christians. Many of the Sheeahs do not seem to be at all particular in observing this injunction; but I have known some Soonnees who would hardly be induced to touch our Bible with the tongs.

Fifthly — In the Resurrection, when all men shall be raised again, and summoned to give an account of their conduct during life. The first raised of men, shall be Mahommed himself, and he shall intercede for his people. Mahomedans who have done well in this life, shall enter paradise, and dwell there for ever in bliss: those who have sinned in this life, but are still true believers, shall be sent to hell for a time, to expiate their crimes, and shall eventually be received into heaven: while all who are not Mahomedans, shall at once be sent to hell to abide there for ever. In one part of the Koran, it is stated that the Day of Judgment will be of a thousand years' duration; and in another part, of fifty thousand years! Mahomedans endeavour to reconcile the difference

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by asserting that these spaces of time are merely figurative, not literal. The delights of heaven and horrors of hell, are painted in the Koran, in the most vivid colours, such as the imagination of an Arab, familiar with sensuality and cruelty, would depict. The hell is certainly frightful enough to alarm anyone possessing a wavering faith, and weak nerves; whereas Tom Moore falls very far short in his conception of Mahommed's paradise, when he states that —

> "A Persian's heaven is eas'ly made
> 'Tis but black eyes and lemonade."

For this is but a small portion of a Persian's future beatitudes, which are of a kind calculated exactly to hit the taste of a luxurious semi-barbarian.

Sixthly — In God's eternal decrees, and absolute predestination of all and every event that happens.

Practical religion requires the following observances—

Prayer — which is to be offered up five times a day, preceded by ablution. The several occasions of prayer are thus named by the Persians — *namâzi soobh* (morning prayer, offered up just before sunrise) — *namâzi zoohr* (noon prayer) — *namâzi asr* (afternoon prayer) — *namâzi maghrib* (evening prayer, just after sunset) and *namâzi esha* (night prayer after dark). The Muezzin calls the faithful to prayer, at three of these periods, namely *soobh, zoohr* and *maghrib* : the other two

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are left to their discretion. Previous to praying, a man must purify himself*, by washing his face, back of the neck, hands and feet; all in due order, with proper ceremony, including the *mazmaza* or rinsing the mouth, and *istinshâk* or rinsing the nostrils by snuffing up water from the palm of the right hand. The *ghoosl* or washing of the whole body, is only occasionally necessary, in certain cases prescribed by law, which need not be mentioned. When water is not to be had, a man before praying, may go through the ceremony of purification, with sand or dust: this is called *tiyammum*. The Mussulman about to pray, lays aside his arms, his watch, and any trinkets he may have about him, pulls off his slippers, and turns his face towards the *kibleh*.† Many make use of a *sejjâda*, a small carpet, upon which they kneel and prostrate themselves; and the Sheeahs have a small round piece of clay, called a *moohr*, which receives the forehead in making the low prostrations. This article resembles a pat of butter: it is often made of the earth of the sacred plain of Kerbela, and commonly has the names of the prophet and other worthies stamped upon it. Upon Friday, every man ought

* Purification is not necessary, should a man happen to be undefiled; but very little suffices to contaminate him.

† The term *kibleh* signifies "point of adoration," and is usually applied to the *kaaba* or holy edifice, situated in the *beit-ullâh* or temple of Mecca. One of the absurdly grandiloquent titles of the Shah of Persia is *kibleh âlam* (point of the world's adoration).

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to say his prayers, at noon-time, in the mosque — on other days, he may say them wherever he happens to be.

The prayers are in Arabic, which few understand, and they are merely gabbled over, the repetition of so many words being deemed sufficient. Prayer is thus, to a Persian, as heartless a duty, as to an Irish papist, who repeats like a parrot, a certain number of Latin phrases, without understanding one of them.

Almsgiving. — Alms should be given out of a person's cattle, fruits, merchandize and treasure. One-fifth of all superfluous wealth should be bestowed in this manner. Those who have no more than what is sufficient to maintain them, are obliged to give only a very little.

Fasting.—This must be observed during the month of Ramazân, when a Moslem must abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, smelling perfume, and every kind of gratification, from sunrise to sunset.

Pilgrimage to Mecca. — Every Mahomedan is bound to perform this, at least once in his life: or if, for satisfactory reasons, he is unable to do so, he ought to send a substitute. Many perform this pilgrimage repeatedly, for the sake of the extra merit, and some Moslem princes have done so in a very magnificent and costly manner. The famous Haroon-ur-Rasheed visited Mecca, not less than nine times; and on each occasion bestowed munificent gifts on the temple and other

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sacred places. On one visit, he expended a sum nearly equal to £700,000 sterling. The Khaleefa Mehdee, the father of Haroon, built caravansaries at every station between Baghdad and Mecca, and spent immense sums at the latter place. Others have made a merit of performing the pilgrimage under every circumstance of privation and hardship. When Haroon-ur-Rasheed was going on one of his pilgrimages, with a splendid train of attendants, he met with Ibrahim Adham, who had once been a powerful prince like himself*, returning from Mecca, whither he had gone alone and on foot: and having vowed to repeat a vast number of prayers, and perform a corresponding quantity of genuflexions, in every mile he walked; he had been not less than twelve years in reaching the holy city!

The pilgrimage is to be performed during the month Zool-hejja; no other time of the year being proper for the accomplishment of this solemn rite.

Sheeahs going on the pilgrimage, consider themselves entitled to put in practice a piece of pious fraud, called *takeeya;* and pass themselves off for Soonnees. The Arabs of Mecca are all of that persuasion, and would not permit an avowed Sheeah to profane the holy temple. The Soonnees

* Ibrahim Adham was prince of Khorassan, in the eighth century, and reigned at Balkh. He suddenly abandoned his throne and kingdom, withdrew to the mountains of Syria, and there betook himself to a religious life.

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properly condemn this abominable hypocrisy, alleging that a man ought to die a hundred times over, rather than deny his real creed. Besides to Mecca, pilgrimages are made to the tombs of saints and holy men, situated in many places; but these acts, in the opinion of many strict Moslems, savour rather of idolatry and heresy, than of true piety.* They are nevertheless exceedingly common, particularly in this country.

Mahomedanism as it now exists, stands upon other foundations than the Koran. This book not furnishing a guide or precept to meet every emergency, a great body of traditions, denominated the *hadees*, has been added thereto; and this law, oral as it originally was, is generally considered equally binding with the written law of the Koran. These traditionary precepts were derived from Mahommed himself, his companions and immediate successors. Some of them are however of doubtful authenticity; and not a few evidently of more modern fabrication. The Persians reckon four kinds of *hadees*, namely:—

saheeh (true) such as are ascribed to any one of the fourteen *mâsoomât* (sinless personages) namely Mahommed himself,

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* The principal places for these minor pilgrimages are, the tomb of Alee, called *mush,hedi alee* at Nejeff near Cufa, the shrine of Imaum Hosein at Kerbela, and that of Imaum Reza at Mush,hed in Khorassan: but all the numerous Imaumzâdehs and tombs of holy characters, throughout the country, are thus visited. The minor pilgrimage is termed a *ziyâret*, as distinguished from the *hajj* or great pilgrimage to Mecca.

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Fatima his daughter, and the twelve *imaums;* and handed down to posterity, by some just and worthy follower of *islâm*, whether Sheeah or Soonnee.

hasan (admirable) ascribed to any of the fourteen aforesaid, and the narrator a Sheeah.

muwassik (trustworthy) emanating from one of the fourteen, and the narrator any person whose word can be relied on.

za,eef (weak) any tradition resting on uncertain grounds, and which may be believed or rejected as one thinks proper.

The Soonnees have other *hadees*, which need be specified.

The Koran and Hadees thus together form a religious code, embracing and governing all Moslem institutions, political and civil, as well as domestic, moral and religious. Almost every act of a Mahomedan's life is in some degree directed by his religious tenets. I may here observe that the rite of circumcision, universally adopted by Moslems, is not positively enjoined on them: but it has always been held obligatory, as following the example of Abraham and Ishmael.

The various acts incidental to a man's life have been laid down, according to the Koran and Hadees, in the following scale:—

wâjib or *farz*.—An act, the performance of which is imperative, and the omission a sin.

moostahabb or *soonnut*.—Any act which it is proper and right to do, but to omit is not sinful.

harâm.—The reverse of *wâjib*.—An act which it is a sin to commit, and righteous to refrain from.

makrooh.—The reverse of *moostahabb*.—An act which is not absolutely sinful, but had better be abstained from.

moobâh or *halâll*.—Any lawful act, in the performance or omission of which, there is neither merit nor sin.

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In the first centuries of Mahomedanism, a great variety of religious disputes arose, and Moslems were divided into different sects, generally hating and condemning each other most heartily. Numerous heresies also made their appearance, followed up by merciless persecutions. Even in Mahommed's lifetime, one Moseilima set himself up in the province of Yemâma, in the centre of Arabia, for a prophet, and was so successful that in a short space of time he had a hundred thousand followers. This man was destroyed, soon after Mahommed's decease, by an army sent against him by Abu-bekr the first *khaleefa*. About the same time, a lady named Shujeeya, calling herself a Christian, laid claim to the honours of prophecy, and gained over a vast number of adherents; but failing in her ambitious enterprize, she eventually became a Mahomedan.

Although the Koran inculcates in the strictest and plainest terms, the doctrine of absolute predestination; there was a teacher at Bussora, named Wâsel Ebn Atta, who held that no such thing as predestination could exist, without stamping the Almighty with gross injustice—that God was the author of good only and not of evil—and that man was, in every respect, a free agent. This man founded a sect, calling themselves the Mota,azalee or Separatists. In the second century of the *hijra*, arose the famous Hakeem of Khorassan, surnamed *mokanna* or

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"the veiled," who taught his followers to believe in the transmigration of souls, and the transfusion of the Deity into Adam and the prophets up to Mahommed, and lastly into himself. This worthy is the hero of the first tale in Lalla Rookh. A century afterwards, the followers of Karmath of Cufa, who had greatly corrupted the Mahomedan worship, rebelled against the *khaleefa*, forbade the pilgrimage to Mecca, murdered the pilgrims, and invaded the holy city. But to enumerate all the heretical and controversial sects that have arisen, would be a lengthy task.

Mahomedanism as it exists at present, in the various countries where this faith prevails, has been everywhere more or less corrupted, by various inventions and superstitions; and nowhere more so than in Persia. The people almost deify their saints, and perform devotions at the shrines of Imaum's children, vagabond derveeshes, and all manner of holy impostors — revering the places where these have lived, and relics of things which belonged to them. All this, according to the original Mahomedan faith, is nothing more or less than idolatry; and is as much opposed to the original spirit of that religion, as the superstitions of the Romish church are to the true genius of Christianity. The common practice, in all Mahomedan countries, of making oblations to the souls of deceased worthies, presenting offerings at their tombs, and invoking their intercession with the Almighty, is decidedly unlawful

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and forbidden: yet it is almost universal. Some of the stricter sects, the Wahaubees in particular, have denounced, and endeavoured to put a stop to such practices; but without success. The numerous miracles attributed to Mahommed, are all modern inventions, for he himself disclaimed the power of working any*; yet the Sheeahs affirm that he wrought no less than 4440 miracles! while the miracles performed by Alee and the other Imaum's and holy personages, are beyond all computation.

Some absurd and unfounded tales regarding the Arabian impostor, have long been current in Europe, and have obtained credence with people who might be better informed. For instance — the story of his training a pigeon to pick grain from his ear, and pretending to his followers that this was the Holy Spirit whispering revelations to him — his great enmity to swine originating in a herd of pigs having spoilt a fictitious miracle of his, by grubbing up some skins of water which he had buried in the desert — his doctrine of women having no souls — and the suspension of his coffin between two huge magnets. These

* He was instructed by the Almighty, according to the Koran, to reply to those who required a miracle at his hands —

قُل سُبْحَانَ رَبّي هل كُنْتُ اِلّا بشراً رسولاً .

"Say unto them — God is gracious — Am I aught but a mere mortal prophet." — Koran, chap. 17.

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fables were probably invented by Christian monks, about the time of the Crusades: they are utterly unknown to Mahomedans.

I shall now proceed to mention the causes that led to the division, giving rise to the two great sects of Moslems, the Soonnee and the Sheeah. The first of these sects, I may observe, includes Arabs, with a very few exceptions, Turks, Affghans, and most Indian Mahomedans; while the Persians, and some Indian Mahomedans, belong to the latter.

While the pseudo-prophet lay on his death-bed, his followers were squabbling about the succession; and they suffered their chief to expire, without ascertaining whom he wished to inherit his office and powers. After some dispute, Abubekr whose daughter Mahommed had married, and who had always been a warm supporter of the new faith, was elected *khaleefa* or successor. This nomination caused great dissatisfaction to Alee, who had fully expected to be chosen; he being cousin as well as son-in-law to Mahommed*, and the first of his relatives who had embraced *Islâm*. It is moreover asserted, by the Sheeahs, that Mahommed had named him as his heir and successor. Alee had a considerable number of friends who adhered to his cause; but the great

* Alee was the son of Abu Tâleb, the younger brother of Abdullah the father of Mahommed. He espoused Fatima, the prophet's only surviving child. He is generally entitled Murteza, signifying "Chosen or approved of by God."

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community of Moslems acknowledged Abu-bekr as their duly constituted sovereign. Abu-bekr held this office for two years, and was succeeded by Omar, whom when dying, he had desired should succeed him.

Omar, after a reign of ten years, during which he vigorously propagated Islâm with sword and fire, was assassinated in the great mosque which he had built in Jerusalem, upon the site of Solomon's temple.* Alee should now have been elected, but as he refused to acknowledge the laws promulgated by the two preceding khaleefas, not recognizing them as legitimate successors, his claims were set aside, and Othman, an old friend and companion of the late prophet, was chosen. Othman reigned twelve years, at the end of which he fell by the hand of an assassin; and Alee at length gained the sovereignty. His reign, which was of about five years' duration, was turbulent and bloody. He never enjoyed a moment's quiet; being harassed with perpetual rebellion and domestic warfare. His chief enemy was Ayesha the daughter of Abu-bekr and widow of Mahommed, a lady of singular energy and spirit. She detested Alee and his wife, and employed every means in her power to excite hostility against them. Moaviyah, a noble of the house of Om-

* According to some accounts, he was assassinated in a mosque at Medina. His murderer was a Persian named Feerooz, whom all Sheeahs regard as a most meritorious character.

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meiya*, who had been Mahommed's secretary and was at this time, governor of Damascus, rebelled against Alee, and was proclaimed *khaleefa* in Syria. A bloody war ensued, with various success; but at length Alee was deserted by many of his followers, and obliged to retreat to Cufa, his capital town; in the mosque of which place, he was murdered by a fanatical ruffian, one of a new heretical sect called the Kharijees. This murder occurred A.H. 40, corresponding to A.D. 660.

Alee was succeeded by Hasan his eldest son, a quiet and timid man, utterly unfit to govern at so turbulent a crisis. He soon resigned in favour of his potent rival Moaviyah, who was accordingly acknowledged khaleefa, making Damascus his capital. Hasan with his younger brother Hosein lived privately at Medina, for some time; but Yezeed the son of the new khaleefa, jealous of the influence which the son and heir of Alee might possess, bribed a slave-girl who was Hasan's concubine, to poison her lord; which she did, and received for this nefarious act a present of 50,000 dirhams, or about 1146*l*. There is a tradition that the high-spirited Ayesha was treacherously destroyed by order of Moaviyah, as she refused to acknowledge allegiance to his son Yezeed, whom he had nominated his heir. She was invited to the khaleefa's palace, where in a chamber pre-

* The family of Ommeiya belonged to the tribe of Koreish. Moaviyah was the son of Abu Sofyân, once the inveterate enemy, and afterwards the convert and friend of Mahommed.

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pared for her reception, was a deep well, the mouth of which was covered with carpets, brocade and cushions, like a couch. Ayesha seated herself upon this, and sank down into the well, which was immediately filled up with stones and earth. After Moaviyah's death, the people of Cufa called upon Hosein to assert his claims to the khalifate, assuring him of their warmest support; and acting upon this promise, he set forth from Medina for Cufa, with what followers he could collect; sending in advance his friend and relative Mooslim, to apprize the inhabitants of Cufa of his coming, and to assemble forces in his aid.

Intelligence of this movement was conveyed to Yezeed at Damascus; and he sent directions to the authorities to quell the rising revolt. Mooslim was put to death at Cufa; and when Hosein reached the plains of Kerbela, the greater part of his army, alarmed at the approach of the khaleefa's forces, deserted him. A small band of faithful friends, that remained with him, was soon cut to pieces, and Hosein was put to death by Shamer, the general of Yezeed's army—A. H. 46 = A. D. 667.* The dynasty of the Ommeiya race, beginning with Moaviyah, lasted from A. D. 661 to 750, when the house of Abbas expelled them and seized the khalifate. Abbas was an uncle of Mahommed; and his great-grandson was placed on the throne, and the last Ommei-

* Moslem historians disagree about the exact date.

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yade khaleefa deposed, by the exertions and intrigues of one Abu-Moslem, a zealous warrior, who for his services was nicknamed the "King-maker," like our famous Earl of Warwick in the contest of the red and white roses. These king-makers almost invariably experience the same ungrateful requital, at the hands of the kings whom they have made, and Abu-Moslem was no exception to this rule. He was assassinated by the orders of the prince whom he had crowned, and who was jealous of his power and influence. The Abbaside dynasty of khaleefas endured for nearly 500 years; when the khalifate was annihilated by the Tartars led by Hulâkoo Khan—A. D. 1242.

The descendants of Alee, considered by Sheeahs the legitimate successors of the prophet, never regained the sovereignty. They dwelt chiefly at Medina, and although they continually endeavoured to undermine the power of the khaleefas, denouncing them as heretics and usurpers, they could never succeed in raising a party strong enough to overthrow them. Alee and his immediate descendants, altogether twelve in number, are termed the *Imaums* or spiritual leaders, and may be considered the founders of the Sheeah sect. The Soonnee sect was founded by the descendants of the house of Ommeiya, who after their expulsion from the khalifate, dwelt at Mecca. They, as well as the Imaums, were the inveterate enemies of the Abbaside khaleefas.

The Persians believe the twelve Imaums to

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have been, like the prophets, pure, holy, and free from all dangerous sin. They are styled *anvár-ulláh* (lights of the Godhead)—*arkán-ul-arz* (pillars of this world)—*ma,áden-ul-ilm* (mines of wisdom) and by other flattering titles. The first three Imaums were Alee and his two sons Hasan and Hosein, already mentioned. The fourth Imaum was Alee the younger, surnamed Zein-ul-Abideen (the ornament of the pious) son of Hosein. He was twenty-three years old at the time of his father's death; and after a life remarkable for nothing but the most devoted piety, he died in his fifty-sixth year, leaving eight sons; the eldest of whom, named Mahommed Baukir, is reckoned the fifth Imaum. Nothing remarkable has been recorded of this worthy, excepting his transcendant virtues; common, as a matter of course, to the whole family. He died suddenly in A.H. 114 = A.D. 733, by poison, as it is supposed, administered by the directions of Hushâm the Ommeiyade khaleefa, then reigning. Jaafer Sâdek the sixth Imaum, was the eldest son of Mahommed Baukir, and like his predecessors, was adorned with every virtue and excellence that can dignify and embellish human nature. He died at the age of sixty-five; and, as Sheeahs assert, his end was hastened, like that of his father, by poison, which Al-mansoor, the second Abbasside khaleefa, caused to be administered. He is said to have disinherited his eldest son Ishmael, on account of his dissipated habits,

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and appointed his second son Moosa his successor.

Moosa surnamed Al-Kâzim (the forbearing, or restraining of wrath), the seventh Imaum, was imprisoned by Haroon-ur-Rasheed, whose jealousy he had excited. He died in prison aged fifty-five; and the office of Imaum devolved on his son Alee Reza. The khaleefas of Baghdad were ever jealous, and probably not without reason, of the influence of Alee's descendants; and Mamoon, the son of Haroon-ur-Rasheed, found it expedient to put this eighth Imaum out of the way, which he accordingly effected by persuading him to partake of a poisoned bunch of grapes. Mahommed Takee, son of Alee Reza, succeeded as ninth Imaum. The khaleefa Mamoon endeavoured to conciliate him by giving him his daughter in marriage, but he did not long enjoy his favoured position. He died in his 25th year, and the Sheeahs insist that Motasem, the successor of Mamoon, poisoned him. Alee Askery, the tenth Imaum, was son to Mahommed Takee, and succeeded him in A.H. 220 = A.D. 835. He resided near Baghdad, under the strict surveillance of the khaleefa, and died in A.H. 254 = A.D. 848; but whether of a natural death or by poison, is a doubtful point.

Hasan Askery, the eleventh Imaum, was the eldest of four sons of the preceding. He was famous for his liberality, as well as for his power of working miracles, which indeed all the Imaums

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possessed in an eminent degree. He died, according to Sheeah accounts, by poison, in A.H. 260 = A.D. 874; and was succeeded by his son, that mysterious personage living to this day (if the Sheeahs are to be believed) Mahommed Mehdee, the twelfth and last of the holy Imaums.

The Sheeahs assert that the Imaum Mehdee (who was born in A.D. 868) was taken away from the sight of men, by the Almighty, on account of the wickedness of mankind, when he was but nine years old—that he is still living in some remote wilderness, concealed from human view—that he retains in his possession, the complete and perfect Koran, which belonged to his ancestor Alee, and which contains various matters not to be found in the Koran of Othman, now in use among men—and that he will appear again, before the end of the world, in order to restore the original purity of Islâm. They style him *sâheb-ul-omr* (master of the age) and *kâ,imi âli muhammad* (upholder of the race of Mahommed). The Soonnees maintain, with more show of truth, that Mehdee was drowned in the Tigris in his boyhood. They believe that there is a Mehdee to come, before the end of the world, to revivify the true faith; but that he is not this Imaum, and has not yet been born.

The chief point at issue between the Sheeahs and Soonnees consists in their different opinions as to the right of succession to Mahommed's

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office and dignities: the former holding this right to be hereditary, and the latter maintaining it to have been elective. The Sheeahs denounce the three first khaleefas as usurpers, and corrupters of the faith; while the Soonnees hold that the rights of the first three were in every respect equal to those of Alee, and that their doctrines and rules are to be equally revered. Both sects maintain that there always has been and will be, upon earth, a leader of the true faith, and vicar of God; but the Soonnees assert this dignity to be vested, formerly in the khaleefas, and now in the Sooltân of Constantinople; while the Sheeahs believe it to belong to the invisible Imaum Mehdee.

The Sheeahs moreover hold that the Koran, as we now have it, is incomplete. This sacred book is divided into thirty sections — according to Sheeah belief there were originally forty; but when the book was arranged and edited by the heretical Abu-bekr and Othman, ten of these sections (in which, among other matters, Alee was declared to be Mahommed's successor) were suppressed and destroyed. The only entire copy of the Koran, they say, belonged to Alee, and now exists in the hands of his invisible descendant. They also reject the traditions and precepts of the first three khâleefas as heretical and unworthy of notice.

A great variety of minor differences obtain between the two sects; such as we should think

hardly weighty or important enough to merit the abhorrence with which each regards the ritual and worship of the other. For example—in one of the positions during prayer, the Sheeah lets his hands drop by his sides, while the Soonnee crosses them in front—the sunset prayer is performed by the Soonnees at *ghoroob*, or as soon as the sun's disc has disappeared beneath the horizon; while the Sheeahs perform it at *maghrib*, or about a quarter of an hour after the disappearance of the sun, while there is yet a redness in the sky. In making the necessary ablutions before prayer, the Sheeahs wash the hands from the elbow to the fingers, while the Soonnees wash from fingers to elbow; and there is also some difference in the mode of washing the feet — but to enumerate all these trifling discrepancies would be tedious.

In the annual festivals, and the modes of celebrating them, some differences exist, which it will be proper to mention.

The festival of the birthday of the prophet, called *moulid-en-nebee* (vulgarly *mouloodi nebee*) is held by the Persians on the 17th of the month Rebee-ul-avval; while the Soonnees hold it on the 12th of the same month.

The 19th, 20th and 21st of the month Ramazân, are held sacred by the Persians, in commemoration of the murder of Alee, who was stabbed on the first of these days, and died of the wound on the last. The Soonnees usually hold

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one day sacred, but make no particular ceremony on the occasion.

The death of Mahommed, termed *wafâti paighamber*, according to the Sheeahs, happened on the 29th of Sefer—while Soonnees assert that his death happened on the same day as his birth, namely the 12th of Rebee-ul-avval. Both sects hold these days, respectively, sacred.

The feast at the termination of the Ramazân fast, called *eidi fitr* or *eidi ramazân*, is celebrated for three days by Soonnees; while the Sheeahs hold it for only one day.

The *eidi korbân* (festival of the sacrifice) held in commemoration of Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son*, is celebrated by both sects on the same day, namely the 10th of Zool-hejja; but the Soonnees keep it up for three or four days, while the Sheeahs content themselves with one day of ceremony.

The 27th of Rejeb is kept festive by the Soonnees as the *eidi mirâj*, or feast of the prophet's nocturnal journey to heaven upon the winged steed *boorrauk*. The Sheeahs, on the other hand,

* The name of this son is not particularly mentioned in the Koran, but he is generally believed to have been Ishmael, not Isaac. I have heard that some Indian Sheeahs suppose him to have been Isaac; but I find the Persians all agree that he was Ishmael. This feast is also named *eidi kabeer* (the great feast) and *eiduz-zohâ* (feast of daylight). In India it is called *bukreed*; and in Turkey *korbân beirâm*. Numbers of sheep and camels are sacrificed on this day, and the flesh distributed to the people.

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maintain that the date of this miraculous ascent is not precisely known; and upon that day (the 27th of Rejeb) they commemorate the *mabaas-un-nebee* or "mission of the prophet;" believing that the day on which Mahommed received his prophetic mission from above.

The Persians observe besides, two feasts, which Soonnees repudiate as abominable — namely — the *eidi ghadeer* (festival of Ghadeer) on the 18th of the month Zool-hejja; when, as they say, Mahommed declared Alee to be his lawful heir and successor, as they stood together upon a pile of packsaddles, in presence of a concourse of pilgrims, at a place in the Arabian desert, called Ghadeer. The other is called the *eidi omar kooshan* (festival of the assassination of Omar) which event is a matter of great rejoicing to all true Sheeahs; held on the 9th of Rebee-ul-avval.

Among other matters, well worth cavilling about, the Soonnees abuse the Persians for wearing green slippers (a very common portion of their costume) and thus profaning the sacred colour* by placing it on the lowest part of their persons. To this, the Sheeahs justly retort, by saying that if green was so sacred that it ought not to be trodden on, God would never have imparted this hue to the grass of the field.

I have heard that many of the Persian Sheeahs

* Green is the colour of the robes of the blessed in Paradise, and is therefore held sacred. The descendants of the prophet are privileged to wear green turbans.

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entertain the belief that Hosein the son of Alee, who was killed at Kerbela, died to atone for the sins of all true Moslems, up to the Day of Judgment; and he is in consequence styled *seiyid-ush-shohada* (prince of martyrs). This belief is not however universal, nor absolutely obligatory; and it has evidently been borrowed from the doctrines of Christianity: as Moslems, in general, hold that no atonement is required, and that man's forgiveness can be obtained by mere repentance of sin.

The Sheeah faith became the national religion of Persia, on the accession of Shah Ishmael in A.D. 1502. The hatred of religious hostility is fully reciprocated by the two sects: the Persian regarding a Turk or an Arab as a heretic not very far removed from an infidel; while they look on him in a similar light.

As concerns the views entertained by Moslems, in regard to infidels — namely all who are not followers of Islâm — I may observe that the Soonnees consider Christians as being *ahli kitâb* or "people of the scriptures," and not utterly *nejis* (unclean) as pagans and idolaters are: while the Sheeahs are taught to consider all who are not Moslems, as alike *mooshrik* or thorough infidels* and wholly unclean; a Christian being quite as much so as any pagan. A Soonnee has

* The term *mooshrik* literally means one who attributes a partner or equal to God; which is heresy of the worst kind. They allege that we do so in asserting the existence of a Trinity.

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generally no objection to eat and drink with a Christian, smoke the same pipe, and enter the same bath with him; or indeed, to do anything but pray along with him, or discuss religious topics; for he cannot endure to argue with any one who denies the truth of the Koran*: a strict Sheeah, on the other hand, is as scrupulous as an Indian Brahmin. To him, the very touch of a Christian is pollution: the carpet he has sat on must be washed, the pipe or coffeecup he has touched must be scoured, before these are again fit for the use of any lawful son of Islâm.

This extreme strictness of purity is disregarded by many of the Persians, particularly by the higher and better educated classes, most of whom have no scruples in associating, eating, drinking or smoking with a European; but the great mass of the people, who are completely led by the nose by their prejudiced moollahs, endeavour to affect great precision in these particulars. Some of them will wash their outer garments, if they chance to brush by a Christian while passing in the street; and it sometimes happens that a beggar who has had a coin flung to him by a European, will wash and scour the money in the nearest puddle, previous to pocketing it, lest he should contaminate and defile his ragged pouch, by consigning thereto an article reeking with pollution

* Most of the Indian Soonnees will neither eat nor drink with Christians; but this is a superstitious prejudice which they have borrowed from the Hindoos.

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from the impure hand of a Christian! With all this absurd affectation of purity, the Persians are usually fond of a religious argument; and are never offended or scandalized at any plea which the Christian may advance in confutation of their creed; but will, with the utmost complacency, allow him to abuse and condemn the Koran, as much as he pleases.

With all this amount of prejudice against Christians and other unbelievers, to which I have alluded, I think I do not err in asserting that among the Persians, one will meet with some of the most liberally tolerant, as well as some of the most fiercely intolerant, of all Mahomedans, whether Sheeah or Soonnee. An opinion seems to prevail in India and in Europe, that there has been of late years, a great relaxation of bigotry and prejudices among the Persian people. Such however is by no means the case, at least as far as Sheerauz is concerned: indeed on the contrary, it would seem that the reverse has taken place. As I have before mentioned, the European is now denied admittance into many places, which in former years he could visit without let or hindrance. When Henry Martyn desired to hold a religious disputation with the *mujtehid* * and

* Sir John Malcolm in his history of Persia, makes a strange mistake with regard to this title. He writes it *mooshtahed* or "giver of evidence," evidently conceiving it to be derived from شهد (to bear witness) instead of from جهد (to strive) which is its real origin. *Mujtehid* signifies one who strives against infidels, and in support of Islâm; and the title is given to

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principal moollahs of the city, that high dignitary invited him to supper, to meet with his antagonists, and hold the discussion.

I am pretty certain that the present Mujtehid of Sheerauz would as soon think of inviting a mad dog to his repast as an infidel Christian. An acquaintance I made here, who is an avowed Soofee or free-thinker, told me that he was first induced to doubt the truth of the faith he had been brought up in, by the conduct of his spiritual pastors the moollahs. He said that he had once been severely reproved by a moollah for giving alms to a poor blind Jew beggar; and when he reminded the pious elder that the beggar was one of God's creatures, he was informed, by way of answer, that the Jew and all of his nation were creatures made only to be damned, and that it was unworthy in any Moslem, made to be saved, to entertain the least pity or sympathy for such wretches. From that time, he conceived such a disgust at the moollahs and their doctrines, that he eventually took to the society of the Soofees, who are all more or less free-thinkers, and many of whom disbelieve in all revealed religion whatever. The moollahs, he told me, were a much worse set now than formerly. Twenty or thirty years ago, there were among them many learned and worthy men, and they cultivated science,

chiefs among the moollahs. The word might be translated "high priest," if such a thing as a regular priesthood was recognized among Mahomedans.

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politeness, and decency in conduct and morals; but now they were mere bigoted brutes, as destitute of learning, as of manners and feelings of humanity.

The Persian Sheeah is more hypocritical and superstitious than devout. He is ready to curse everyone who differs in the least from himself, in religious opinions; if these opinions are openly avowed, for otherwise it does not matter—he pretends to great purity—avoids all intercourse with infidels—and for pretence makes long prayers, when people are looking at him—but at the same time, he is very lax in his obedience to the behests of his boasted creed, further than outward show goes—and in private, he little scruples at outraging every precept that interferes with his pleasures and inclinations. The Soonnee is far more consistent and sincere. The Turk or Arab does not affect disgust at intercourse with persons of a different faith, but rather pities them as people going on the road to perdition. He avoids all controversy, is not given to freethinking or raising doubts, but adheres steadfastly to what he believes to be the only true path. The Sheeah is fond of argument, and often ready to take up any manner of wild notion, however heterodox—and notwithstanding his self-sanctity, purity, and hatred of unbelievers, he is often, at heart, a partial or complete unbeliever himself.

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The Persians revere and adore Alee to such an extent, that they have been accused of deifying him. He is styled the Lion of God, the Lord of all true believers, and the King of mankind. He is supposed to have been the handsomest and cleverest man that ever appeared on earth. Setting aside these extravagant encomiums, Alee was undoubtedly a bold and resolute warrior, not less distinguished for his prowess in single combat, than for his skill in commanding an army. With his famous double-bladed sword, named *zool-fekâr**, he generally proved more than a match for any opponent who ventured to cope with him. Among his sayings and maxims, which the Persians regard as mines of wisdom, he has evinced his partiality for war in the cause of the faith he advocated, in the following terms—"Holy wars are the pillars of religion, and the highways of the happy; and to those who are engaged in them, the gates of heaven shall be open." Another saying of his is—"Restraining self from carnal appetites is the greatest holy war"—a maxim which he does not appear to

* This sword, it is said, the angel Gabriel gave to Mahommed, who presented it to his valiant son-in-law. The name is a singular one—it literally signifies "possessed of a spine"—*fekâr* signifying the vertebræ of the back. This double-bladed, or at least double-pointed, sword is a favourite warlike emblem with all Mahomedans, and is represented on flags and pennons.

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have acted on by any means: for if some of his biographers are to be believed, he was in no way remarkable for continence or self-denial. The Sheeahs, however, look on him as absolute perfection, and the noblest of God's creatures.

The Seiyids or descendants of the prophet, through his daughter and Alee, are exceedingly numerous in Persia; but great numbers of those so calling themselves, must be mere impostors. In India they are also very plentiful, but the Persians do not admit the genuineness of Indian Seiyids, with a few exceptions. One tenth of the revenues of Persia, is distributed in pensions to these worthless holy drones. The best religious and moral systems of human invention, are all more or less faulty and disfigured by impurities and absurdities. The oft-repeated prate about the wisdom and virtue of the ancients, and the sublimity and beauty of their principles, is as sickening as it is false. Mahomedanism, borrowing largely as it does, from the Jewish and Christian dispensations, is one of the best that has been devised; but it is imperfect like all the others. How immeasurably inferior do they all appear, when contrasted with the beauty and purity of Christianity!—with the noble principles which the Gospel unfolds, and the regenerating influence, which its dispensation works on the corrupt heart of man—with the pureness of mind, and the innocence and benevolence of life

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and conduct, which our Saviour's precepts require! There is always something dirty and degrading at the bottom of every man-devised system of religion, but Mahommed's creed has less of this, than many others.

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CHAP. XX.

Of the Soofee Doctrines.—Prospects of Christianity in Persia.

I HAVE already alluded to the Soofees, a free-thinking sect of philosophers, at one time very numerous at Sheerauz; but now rather unpopular, on account of the ascendancy of their mortal enemies the rigidly righteous moollahs.

They constitute a sect adopting a philosophy of a peculiar kind, embracing very unorthodox religious opinions. The name was, in former times, applied to the more learned and devout; but modern Soofees are rather too liberal in their sentiments. Any attempt to explain the tenets of Soofeeism would be tedious and uninteresting; and in truth, I am not adequate to the task. I may briefly observe that the principal article in their creed, is a kind of pantheism—holding that the spirit or essence of the Deity pervades all nature; and that human souls are portions of this divine spirit, to be eventually re-absorbed into their source. This is very similar to the deification of intellect, and worship of genius, which Carlyle, Emerson and the like, seem to advocate so

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warmly.* Modern Soofees are divided into two great classes—the *soofee mootasharria* or "Soofee according to law," and the *soofee mootlak* or "complete Soofee." The first of these acknowledge the Koran as the word of God, but consider much of it merely metaphorical, and not requiring strict obedience; they also admit the divine mission of their prophet, but do not pay any great attention to his precepts. The second or "complete" Soofees do not scruple to avow an entire disbelief in both book and prophet; and are, in reality, deists, admitting of no revealed religion whatever, except what is made known by the inward light, with which they suppose every man to be gifted.

To take no thought on the morrow, to regard with indifference all that befalls one in this world, to receive thankfully everything, as a dispensation of an allwise Providence—are essential points in the Soofee's doctrine.† They hold that

* The result of this, is precisely what Milton has described of the Stoic philosophers:—

> "Ignorant of themselves, of God much more
> Much of the soul they talk, but all awry
> And in themselves seek virtue: to themselves
> All glory arrogate, and to God give none."

† One of the Soofee doctors has declared the essence of true Soofeeism to be—

آنچه در سر داري بنهي و آنچه در کف داري بدهي و از
آنچه بر تو آيد نجهي

"Discard whatever wishes you may have conceived—give

a knowledge of the truth can only be acquired by intensely profound and abstracted meditation, joined with a complete withdrawing from worldly cares and pursuits. A metaphysical and vague system of philosophy like this, must needs include a great variety of opinions; and the two principal sects of the Soofees, already mentioned, are subdivided into a great number of classes, holding different ideas as to how a knowledge of sublime truth is to be acquired. When men embark in such an undefined and troubled sea of extraordinary doctrine, it is not easy to say what wild notions they may not hold, or what singular views they may not adopt.*

Many men of science and literature have belonged to this class, particularly the poets; though these have at the same time, professed to be orthodox Moslems. Two of the greatest oracles of the Soofees, are celebrated poets — Jelâl-ud-deen Roomee, a native of Balkh who flourished in the thirteenth century; and Sheikh Attaur of

away whatever you may be possessed of — and endeavour not to shun whatever may happen to you."

* Hâfiz (himself a Soofee) is evidently of opinion that inspired knowledge may be gained by other means than meditation and fasting — for example —

صوفي از پرتو مي راز نهاني دانست
كوهر هركس از اين لعل تواني دانست

"The Soofee discovers deep mysteries in the beams of the rosy wine; for this liquid ruby reveals the true character of us all."

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Nishapoor, who lived a century previous. These are considered perfect models of contemplative philosophers, and pearls of the ocean of Soofee mysticism. The effusions of these two worthies are greatly, and deservedly, admired; but the whole body of moollahs condemn them as blasphemous and heretical. I have read, and tried to understand, a good deal of their mystic song; but though sensible of the beauty of the verses, I must admit that the occult spiritual meaning, apart from the ordinary literal signification of the text, is beyond my comprehension altogether. The principal objects of the Soofee poet's animadversion are the *zâhids* or rigidly righteous, namely, those who adhere to the letter of the law, and interpret the Koran literally. These, the Soofee terms *ahli soorat* or "lookers on the exterior," while he styles himself and his fraternity *ahli maanee* or "penetrators into the mystery or true meaning." *

Sir William Jones has thought fit to compare Jelâl-ud-deen Roomee with Shakespeare! This learned orientalist was a thorough enthusiast, and being one of the first of Britons who made any great advancement into the then uncleared and rarely trodden paths of Eastern lore, a cer-

* Jelâl-ud-deen Roomee, commonly styled the Moulavee (learned doctor) has declared himself, in one passage in his celebrated mystic poem called the Musnavee, to be neither Moslem, Christian, Jew, nor fireworshipper, but an emanation of the divine spirit!

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tain amount of enthusiasm is perfectly allowable. But to compare this mystified Moslem with our matchless high priest of Nature, is a stretch of undue appraisement which can hardly be excused. Indeed the surpassing and universal talent of the Sweet Swan of Avon — the wonderful insight into nature's ways and secrets, and power of pourtraying all with such exquisite fidelity — the eloquent expositions of the bard's own feelings and thoughts, combined with unbounded philanthropy and brilliant wit — are the very points in which Asiatic poets are generally deficient. There is a dreary sameness in the compositions of most Mahomedan bards: they evince much poetical power certainly, but little inventive genius; and their hearts and true feelings are never expanded in their effusions. I speak in general terms, for there are a few to whom this charge cannot apply.

The chief objection to be advanced against Soofeeism, is that it will admit of almost anything in the way of preposterous doctrine. Being in itself, no definite system of religious faith, it may include and sanction every kind of absurd notions and visionary ideas, to which wild enthusiasm and perverted judgment may give rise.

A new religious sect, calling themselves the Bâbees, has appeared within a few years past, and caused no small stir throughout Persia. The founder was one Alee Mahommed, who not many years ago was a merchant at Bushire,

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where he was noted as a person of irregular and eccentric habits, possessing somewhat indefinite ideas of "meum" and "tuum," and consequently better known than trusted. Having first served an apprenticeship as disciple of one Sheikh Ahmed, a setter forth of new and strange doctrines in Arabia; this man set himself up at Bushire as a religious demagogue, calling himself the *bâb*, i. e. "door or gate*," and having travelled through the country into Mazanderân, gained a vast number of converts, exciting everywhere a religious fanatical frenzy, which astonished the orthodox moollahs, and eventually alarmed the Persian government.

Regarding the tenets of the Bâbees, as the followers of this man are entitled, I have heard various conflicting stories. Some report their creed to be a species of socialism, including a community of goods and wives — a denial of a future state of existence — and a license for all manner of profligacy. Others allege this to be a calumny devised by their enemies, and that their belief is based on the following grounds. The Bâb, according to this account, gave out that he had obtained possession of the ten lost sections of the Koran, which (as I have previously explained) the Sheeahs suppose to have been suppressed; and that these new found chapters tended to abrogate and alter much of the sacred

* The idea would seem to be taken from St. John, x. 9.

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book, in its now universally acknowledged condition. Unfortunately for these pretensions, the sections in question, having been examined by competent judges, are pronounced to be a manifest forgery, consisting only in a miserable imitation of the style of the Koran, composed in indifferent Arabic.* The followers of the Bâb are however perfectly satisfied as to their genuineness and authenticity; and hold the Koran, as it is, to be incomplete for salvation, the Moslem faith to be corrupted, and the orthodox Sheeahs to be little better than *kâfirs* or downright infidels. What their own articles of faith really are, I have not been able to ascertain; for the Bâbee sect is at present outlawed and proscribed, and no one likes to admit having any knowledge of such people or their tenets; so that the only information I can obtain is vague and unsatisfactory.

It seems however, according to most accounts, that like the Sadducees of old, they do not acknowledge a judgment or a future state; and if this be the case, the immorality of their lives may easily be credited; for when unbelief can persuade men that they will die like beasts,

* There seems to be some similarity between the Bâbee creed and that of the Mormonites, now making a stir in the civilized world. Like the Bâb, Joe Smith gave out that the book of Mormon, which had come into his possession, was the completion of Heaven's revelation to man, and a superaddition to the Bible. He also advocated a community of goods, a plurality of wives, and other claptraps to captivate the vulgar.

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they can readily be induced to live like beasts also. That quaint old physician Sir Thomas Browne has truly said, "the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, is to tell him that he is at the end of his nature, and that there is no further state to come." And surely no mortal is more to be pitied than the sceptic, who makes his own limited view, the measure and bounds of all that does or can exist, and discredits a hereafter. A socialist sect is not an absolute novelty in Persia. There existed one, as long ago as the time of King Noushirvan (in whose reign Mahommed was born) headed by an oriental Robert Owen, named Mazdak, who inculcated a community of goods and women. This worthy was very properly put to death, along with numbers of his dissolute followers, by Noushirvan.

The Bâbees having become exceedingly numerous, the Persian Government decided on suppressing this formidable sect, by force; and these fanatics have, in several places, risen in open rebellion against the Shah; which has led to the destruction of numbers of them. About five months ago, a distinguished Bâbee leader, named Seiyid Yahiya, was killed, together with many of his people, at Neereez, a village near Sheerauz: and lately the Bâb himself was taken and put to death at Tabreez. The circumstances attending this unfortunate man's execution were very singular. The wretched fanatic himself declared

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that should he be put to death, he would appear in life again, before the expiration of forty days: and this his disciples believed implicitly. He was doomed to be shot, and in pursuance of this sentence, was taken out into a public place, and a file of soldiers drawn out and ordered to fire on him. Whether the men were afraid of the vengeance of his numerous followers, or for some other reason, were unwilling to kill him, is uncertain: but when the volley was fired, every shot missed him, whereupon the Bâb fled under cover of the smoke, and would have got clear off, had not some of the bystanders observed his flight, and given information as to where he had gone. He was soon retaken and put to death. Had he made his escape, which he was very near doing, and after some time, appeared again whole and sound, there is little doubt that the Shah would have been no longer safe on his throne. A miracle, apparently so true and manifest, would have sufficed to convert half the nation, and subvert all authority!

It is said that the number of the Bâbees, not long ago, amounted to about 100,000 souls, but the Government is now trying hard to extirpate them: many have been destroyed; and many more have returned to their former faith and occupations. A large number of them are now up in arms at Zenjân, a small town halfway between Tehrân and Tabreez, and have hitherto succeeded in repulsing the troops which the Shah

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has sent against them. I have heard that there are a good many still in Sheerauz; but they keep their opinions secret; for any one professing to be a Bâbee is liable to be put to death without mercy.

Christianity, it is said, was first introduced into Persia, by St. Thomas and St. Jude; the latter of whom was martyred in this country. This is a very doubtful tradition; but the true religion certainly found its way hither, at an early period, and must have spread to some extent.* Christians were persecuted by King Shapoor, some of whose courtiers had embraced the faith; and the persecution was stayed in consequence of a remonstrance sent by the emperor Constantine the Great. After Shapoor's death it broke out again; and Khosrow Perveez in particular, treated the Christians with great severity.

* The Nestorian faith, after being condemned in the West during the first half of the fifth century, spread rapidly in the East; and prevailed in Persia and Asia Minor. The Nestorians are now numerous in the mountains of Koordistan; and within a few years past, several American missionaries have established themselves at Ooroomia on the frontier of that region, and are now zealously employed in educating and instructing many of the younger members of this Christian sect. Nestorius was Patriarch of Constantinople; and in 431 was expelled and denounced as a heretic by the council of Ephesus, for refusing to call the Virgin "mother of God," and sundry other so-called heresies. Nestorian doctrines are more like those of the Protestant church, than any other Eastern Christian system. They have no images or relics, no convents or nunneries; they acknowledge no purgatory, no transubstantiation, no auricular confession; and their notions of the Divinity of the Saviour are scriptural and accurate.

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Since these times, the Christian religion can hardly be said to have existed in Persia; the Armenians and Roman Catholics being comparatively few in number, and possessing little or no influence in the country. The first Protestant missionary to Persia, was the famous Henry Martyn, who came hither in 1811. He accomplished one very important work; a tolerably well executed translation of the New Testament into Persian, in the preparation of which version, he was assisted by a Soofee of Sheerauz: but zealous and meritorious as his exertions were, there is no evidence to show that any Persian was converted to Christianity by his means. The author of the life of this excellent man, has indeed ventured to assert broadly that several Mahomedans of consequence, at Sheerauz, had declared their conviction of the truth of the Christian faith, in consequence of Martyn's labours among them; but on inquiry I cannot find this to have been by any means the case. It is much to be regretted that biographers will so commonly give way to the promptings of a lively imagination, instead of confining themselves to facts. Of all men in this world, the apostolic Martyn least stood in need of any exaggerated or fictitious panegyric, to exhibit his character in an exalted point of view.

In the Asiatic Journal of the month of March, 1830, there appeared an account of an anonymous English gentleman having accidentally met, at

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Sheerauz, with a Persian named Mahommed Raheem, a well-educated and respectable man, who was intimately acquainted with the English language, and who was secretly a Christian, having been converted by Henry Martyn. Since my arrival in Sheerauz, I have made every inquiry in my power regarding this individual, but can gain no tidings of him. The name is not an uncommon one, but I was in hopes that his acquaintance with our language might lead to his discovery; particularly as the English tongue is quite unknown, and I am assured that there is not a single Sheerauzee in the city who understands one word of it.* I cannot however get any information regarding this person, though I have spoken with some who knew Henry Martyn well. As the writer of the narrative above referred to, does not think proper to give his name, it is probable that the account is a fiction — or, as full twenty years have elapsed since this meeting is said to have taken place, it may be that Mahommed Raheem has long ere now departed to reap the fruits of his acceptance of "the truth as it is in Jesus," and has been forgotten by the world in which he lived.

* One of my acquaintances, a merchant here, told me that when on one or two occasions, some English bills had found their way into his hands, he was obliged to send them all the way to Bushire to have them interpreted. Some years ago there was an Armenian here, who had been in India, and knew a little of English, and he seems to be the only person on record so qualified.

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Henry Martyn appears to have been much respected. He has been described to me, as a delicate emaciated young man with a pale face and a thin sandy beard; and so gentle and conciliatory in his manners, that even the moollahs could not help admiring him, however greatly they detested his doctrine. After Martyn's decease, no Protestant missionary visited Persia, till 1829, when one or two Germans entered on this sadly neglected field, but without much success attending their labours. The Rev. William Glen arrived in this country in 1838, having prepared a translation of the Old Testament at Astrakhan; and in about three years, he corrected and completed this, also revising and correcting the New Testament of Martyn. The Persian Bible thus completed, is one of the best versions in any modern Oriental language. Mr. Glen had, I understand, contemplated an entire new translation of the New Testament, Martyn's performance being by no means first-rate, but this design was frustrated by his death, which happened not long ago at Tehrân.

No missionary has attempted public preaching in this country. The Persians would not tolerate any such deliberate attack on their religion: for though they have, in general, no objections to argue the point in private, they would not, for a moment, permit any *kâfir* publicly to assail the doctrines of Islâm; and a missionary could only do so at the extreme hazard of his life. The

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Shah has moreover promulgated a law, forbidding all attempts at proselytism among any class of his subjects; insomuch that not long ago, some German converts from the Jewish faith — who had come to this country as emissaries from the London Church Missionary Society, and had established themselves at Ispahan, with a view of converting the Jews of that city—were compelled to relinquish their labours, and to withdraw from the place.

In the opinion of some, in regard to the spread of Christianity, the Persians are the most accessible and hopeful of Mahomedans. For my own part, though I have perhaps no right to express any opinion on the subject, I have little hope in the efficiency of missionary labour in any Mahomedan country, as long as that country remains under despotic Mahomedan rule. When Persia and other Eastern lands of darkness have been conquered and brought under subjection by Christian nations (as there is little question but they all will be sooner or later) we may then look for better things; but as long as they continue to be governed by an intolerant, and ignorant crew of moollahs * — for the sovereign, though a

* The policy of Hudibras's presbyterian saints exactly describes that of Persian moollahs —

"Sure 'tis an orthodox opinion
That grace is founded in dominion
Great piety consists in pride
To rule is to be sanctified.

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despot, is rarely otherwise than a puppet in the hands of these holy rogues — so long will a worse than Cimmerian darkness dwell on the face of these lands, shrouding them from every ray of truth and enlightenment. The Persians are undoubtedly more intelligent, and have more spirit of inquiry, than any other Moslems I have met with; and, as I have before observed, they are partial to argument and discussion on matters which the Soonnee never touches on.

The Arab, Turk or Indian Moslem is generally averse to all religious controversy and inquiry; holding that faith should be implicit, and that all attempt at investigation is improper and tending to heresy: he therefore will not listen to a single word calling in question the truth of what he considers himself bound to believe fully and entirely without reserve or hesitation. Such blind and unconditional belief is hard to assail. The Greeks were Christianized more rapidly than the Romans, as they were so much fonder of argument and speculation on theology, leading them to discover the imperfections of their own mythological system. It is therefore not unreasonable to hope that the Persians may be the first to discard the errors of Islâm, and embrace the faith of the Gospel. Martyn expressed his

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To domineer and to control
Both o'er the body and the soul
Is the most perfect discipline
Of church-rule and by right divine."

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belief that they would be the first of the Arab impostor's flock, who would march onwards to Zion — and he was probably right — but this will not be, until the condition of Persia is totally altered from its present state.

Among the peculiar obstacles and difficulties retarding the progress of Christianity and the reception of the Gospel, in this and other Moslem lands, the following may be enumerated —

As I before remarked, the glad tidings of salvation cannot be openly proclaimed in a country under uncontrolled Moslem government. The populace, ruled and guided by their moollahs, are taught to regard the murder of an infidel attempting to subvert Islâm, as a highly meritorious and commendable deed — a notion which they would not be slow to act on; and in all probability the excited rabble would put to death, not only the preacher, but all other Christians within their reach. A missionary may perchance find opportunities of instructing privately, as our Lord did Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman; but public preaching is wholly out of the question.

According to their law, any Moslem lapsing from his religion, is liable to be put to death without mercy — a Persian, embracing Christianity, would therefore be subject to capital punishment; and this sentence would in all probability be anticipated by the rage of the populace. Mahommed Alee, the late Basha of Egypt, had

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the boldness and firmness to oppose this law in his dominions; but in this country, the power and influence of the moollahs is far too predominant to admit of any such attempt being made; even supposing the Shah and his ministers willing to essay it — a supposition which no one could at present entertain.

The next obstacle worthy of mention, is the difficulty that exists in persuading the people that our Bible contains the word of God. They hold that the Testaments, which they believe were imparted to Moses, Jesus and other prophets, were all superseded and abrogated by the Koran; and when no longer of use on earth, were carried back to heaven; so that the Scriptures, now in our hands, are fabrications, written out by certain Jews and Christians, partly from memory and partly invention; much being omitted and interpolated, and the whole so garbled and corrupted, that it is impossible to distinguish true from false matter.

Another obstacle to the truth, among the Moslem community, is their defective conception of the Deity and His attributes. The delusive doctrines of the false religion in which they are brought up, serve to blind their understandings to all proper apprehensions of the Godhead, and of the glorious plan of redemption of fallen mankind, which Infinite wisdom, justice, and mercy alone could have contrived. Mr. Urquhart, in his "Spirit of the East," has shown that

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he considers Islâm as nearer in degree to the true Church (meaning, I presume, the Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland) than many sects of so-termed Christians. If I cannot say that I fully concur in this opinion, neither will I attempt to contradict it; being well aware that there are some so-called Christian communities, that are an utter disgrace to the name.

The Moslems may, in some sense, be said to be heterodox Christians; for they believe in the immaculate conception of our Saviour, in the power of prophecy He possessed, and in the miracles He wrought; but they deny His being the Son of God, and one with the Deity; though they admit that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. In these particulars, they are not further from the truth than some of the Unitarian and Socinian sects, who choose to call themselves Christians. The Koranic account of our Saviour is confused and absurd, and some of the traditional stories of Him, current among Moslems, are sufficiently puerile and silly: none are worth repeating. They hold our Lord to have been the most immaculate and sinless of men; but a Moslem's notions of spotless innocence, are widely different from those which Christ inculcated. A few days ago, I was talking on the subject with a Persian; and he told me that on one occasion, while Jesus was passing through a street of Jerusalem, a woman of bad repute, who was diseased, laid

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hold of the skirt of His robe and besought Him to cure her. He immediately complied with her request; but such was the stainless purity of Jesus, that the skirt of His garment, having been touched by a sinning woman, was polluted beyond all possibility of purification; and accordingly, when He returned home, He cut off the skirt and burnt it! So much for a Sheeah's ideas of purity! I gave him the seventh chapter of Luke to read in Martyn's Testament, in order perhaps to correct an erroneous impression; or at least to render him aware of our opinions on the subject.

With the modicum of truth, which Mahommed borrowed for his Koran, from the Christian Scriptures, the Moslems do not possess any just conception of the law and justice of the Almighty. They have little or no right feeling of moral responsibility, and consequently no proper sense of the guilt of sin, and the punishment it must deserve. Sin of the worst kind is a mere trifle in the view of the Mahomedan; as he believes that God can forgive it at once, without any atonement — repentance of the act being all that is needful.* "I am a true believer," says the

* Repentance, in a Mussulman's idea, is merely an expression of sorrow for the act committed. There is none of the self-condemnation, the hatred of sin, and determination, with God's assistance, not to repeat it, which constitute Christian repentance. Regeneration of heart, and a new birth unto righteousness, the Mahomedan has no notion of. His idea of a sanctified life consists in the performance of a great deal of

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self-righteous Moslem when about to perpetrate some piece of disgusting villainy, "and therefore God will forgive me."

There remains another obstacle of the first magnitude, to be overcome before the Gospel can be received by these people — namely — the licentiousness and profligacy, which their religion not only admits of, but in some degree encourages. The almost universal depravity of morals, resulting from their licentious creed and sensual habits, will be the hardest stumbling-block which Christianity will have to encounter. The rigid control of the passions — the self-denial — the chastity and purity of mind as well as body, which our Saviour's precepts demand, are things which the Moslem has no conception of.

There is, after all, but little to touch the heart in boasted *Islám*. It is a cold worldly faith, requiring a good deal of outward ceremony, but having little influence on the morals and hearts of its professors. Certain unmeaning ceremonies must be scrupulously gone through, and certain things rigidly abstained from; and this is all that is required of man. Repentance atones for all sins, and the self-satisfied "true believer" need give himself no further trouble. The best that can be said of Mahomedanism is that it does not

outward ceremony, pilgrimages, almsgiving to derveeshes and impostors, and various fanatical austerities; a more than ordinary share of pride and self-satisfaction, and an unlimited hatred of all of his fellow-creatures whose belief differs from his own.

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embrace many absurdities, which other creeds of human invention do. It is certainly better than any system of paganism, and preferable to deism denying revelation. The best parts of it have been derived from the Bible; but it falls far short of a proper standard.

The Moslem, according to his own views, may go direct to heaven, treading "the primrose path of dalliance" the whole way through life, and cherishing every evil passion in his heart. He has no belief, nor would he wish to believe, that happiness in eternity can only be reached by "the steep and thorny way," requiring first regeneration of heart, and crucifixion of the flesh with its lusts and pleasures; and then leading over a toilsome route beset with sorrows, trials and fatigues. Mahomedans consider themselves the only objects of God's kindness and mercy, while they believe that all other people shall be the objects of His wrath and indignation. The worst that can happen to them, they think, is punishment in hell for a time, after which, through their prophet's intercession, they will be received into Paradise; while all others are condemned to everlasting fires. In one of their lives of the prophets, which I read some years ago, I recollect an incident setting forth that Mahommed being once in a trance, beheld his own father and mother burning in the flames of hell; and being about to intercede with the Almighty in their behalf, he was informed that if he ventured to interpose in

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behalf of infidels, as his parents were, his intercession for the faithful, at the Day of Judgment, would not be accepted! and he was therefore obliged to leave them to their fate.* And besides the infinite mercy of God in forgiving sin, which they rely on to an extent, entirely setting aside His justice (for the Koran tells them not how God can justify sinful man in a way in which justice harmonizes with mercy) they suppose that religious merit can be gained by almsgiving, pilgrimages, holding readings of the Koran, and other similar means. For unbelievers there is no hope, however blameless their conduct may have been in this life. All this tends to make them despise and hate all others; and encourages them to indulge in every kind of vice without a blush. "Charity, love, humility, peace, and good will to all men," the principles inculcated by the Word of God, they are utter strangers to: while pride, bigotry, self-satisfaction, and hatred of all others, are the sentiments which their religion implants in their hearts.

Mahomedans have no missionaries: they make no attempt to convert others, holding that as the number of true believers has been settled and decreed from all eternity, it is utterly useless in

* Some Mussulman sects, and most of the Sheeahs in particular, believe that the fathers and grandfathers of all prophets were true believers, and free from all damnable sins. I do not at present recollect the title of the work, to which I have referred, but the author was certainly a Soonnee.

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man's attempting to increase or diminish that number. Like Christians, they believe faith to be God's free gift, but they have no notion of man's exerting himself to obtain that gift, or to have it imparted to his fellow-creatures.*

Experience has hitherto tended to show that the most effectual mode of propagating the Gospel, is a process of education; which instruction must be based on the immutable foundation of God's Word. Education without knowledge of the Truth as revealed in the Scriptures, is what Archbishop Tillotson has called "impertinent vanity and a glittering kind of ignorance;" and the results of such education, in colleges in India where the Bible is excluded, have fully exhibited its pernicious tendency. The natives so instructed, usually learn, at first, to despise their own faith; and latterly, to laugh at all religion whatever, as an idle superstition. When one witnesses the high mental qualifications, with which so many of the Persians are endowed, it is grievous to think how these are doomed to be perverted and wasted. No means exist for the regeneration of Persia, whose sons are abandoned to the blind

* Conversion to Islâm was, in former ages, vigorously carried on by the sword; but Mahomedan nations are now too feeble and powerless to attempt this mode of adding to the number of the Faithful. They have never tried to convert by persuasion and reasoning. The "argumentum baculinum" was the method recommended by the false prophet himself; and no gentler means of proselytism have been adopted by his followers.

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guidance of their vile moollahs—no useful education is offered to the people; and it is hardly to be expected that their government would tolerate it: for as I have before observed, all attempts at establishing European instruction, even in secular matters, have been promptly and decisively frustrated by the moollahs, who have resolutely set their faces against any such innovation.

A missionary to a Mahomedan population, besides being well versed in the truths which he has to impart, and having a perfect fluency in the language, ought to be thoroughly acquainted with the religion, the peculiar tenets, the prejudices, and the superstitions of the people. This latter branch of information is too frequently neglected, though it is nearly as necessary as the former—for to conduct an argument properly, the preacher ought to have the Koran and the traditions at his finger-ends, as well as his Bible and the doctrines of his church. A command of the language is not sufficient, however absolutely necessary, for the purpose of controversy. One must be acquainted with the ideas of the Moslems, with their ways of thinking and reasoning, which are often very dissimilar to ours; and whatever proposition is put forth, should be urged and maintained in a spirit of benevolence and charity. A missionary is too often regardless of the feelings of the heathen, and is more ready to dogmatize and browbeat, than to reason in a conciliatory manner: from such a mode of argu-

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ment, no salutary effect can result. It is also of great importance that the missionary should be well versed in Natural Philosophy, as he may expect to be often interrogated on many subjects comprehended in this science; and should he likewise possess a knowledge of medicine and surgery, it would be of infinite service to him. The Persians are sharp and ready in argument, and reason remarkably well: so that it is not so easy to confute them. One advocating the claims of Christianity, ought to be thoroughly able to plead his cause in the clearest and most forcible manner, or his want of success in argument will be attributed to the weakness of that cause. I may here remark that the people of Mussulman countries are, in general, much better acquainted with the principles of their religion, than those of Christian nations (to their shame be it said!) are with their better and purer faith. Supposing one were to enter a crowded bazar in any large Mahomedan city, and to take the first hundred individuals he met with, of all ages, grades and occupations, and ask them separately, to give an account of their religious faith — I believe he would find ninety in the hundred, competent to give him a clear and distinct account of the tenets of Islâm; though perhaps not five persons out of the number, would be able to read and understand the original Arabic of the Koran.*

* The language of the Koran is the old classical Arabic, which is not intelligible to a modern Arab (still less so to a

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Whereas if he were to walk into a public thoroughfare in any English city, and do likewise — I suspect that, although every one of the hundred possessed Bibles and were able to read them, he would hardly find ten individuals, in the whole number, competent to render "a reason of the hope that is in them" in any accurate or satisfactory manner; while the remaining ninety would be found to entertain the most confused and incorrect ideas of the religion they professed; or would be obliged to own that they knew nothing about it, and left all such matters to the parson of the parish! How many of our countrymen are there, of the best education and capabilities, possessing ample competence of wealth and means of doing good; holding a high position in society; and affording, in no small degree, an example to others — who neither know nor care an iota about the religion which they profess to believe; and, it is to be presumed, hope to be saved by — who never, as far as their outward conduct would evince, have bestowed a single thought on the subject; as if eternal life were a trifle not worth a moment's serious consideration! How many of these are there, who openly and constantly violate every command of that religion, as if they took pride in setting the Almighty at defiance — and affect to despise, as fools and bigots, all who believe in, and endea-

Persian or a Turk) with the exception of the educated and learned few.

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vour to live according to those commands! On the other hand — the erring followers of the prophet of Mecca, high and low, educated and illiterate, rich and poor, all uphold their religion as their chief glory and boast — while they say, and not without reason, that we look as if we were heartily ashamed of ours!

As I have previously remarked, before Mussulman nations can be Christianized, they will, in all human probability, be subdued and governed by Christian powers. The time, in all likelihood, is not far distant. The Persian and Turkish governments are weak, imbecile and tottering; and they subsist rather by the sufferance of European powers (particularly England, France and Russia) and the jealousy of these powers of each other, than by any strength or stability of their own. Such a posture of affairs cannot last; and they must, ere long, tumble in ruins. The Crescent, once bright and vigorous, is now a waning moon, rapidly approaching her extinction; and she will never be able to fill her silver horns again.

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CHAP. XXI.

Sheerauz.—Reminiscences of Prince Lootf Alee Khan.—Festival of Omar's Assassination.—Departure from Sheerauz.—Zargoon.—Vale of Mervdasht.—Village of Kinaureh.

A TWO months' residence at Sheerauz affords ample time for the gratification of a traveller's curiosity, in regard to all matters connected with the place; and towards the end of that period, I had made up my mind to proceed northwards to Ispahan. Mr. G. agreed to accompany me as far as Persepolis; the remains of which celebrated spot, we were both very desirous of inspecting.

At times, when the weather permitted, I used to go to shoot snipe, in some places near the salt lake, where these birds are to be found. These and a very few partridges and hares, are the only description of game I have seen in the vicinity of Sheerauz. In all my walks and excursions, I have been in the habit of conversing freely with the people whom I have met with; and I have generally found them civil, and willing to afford any information I sought. One may occasionally

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obtain a good deal of interesting and amusing intelligence from Persians; for many of them are fond of talking, and glad to get hold of a stranger to enlighten. Some of the old men can give curious accounts of events which happened in their younger days. Just before quitting Sheerauz, I met one day with an old man of more than eighty years, who in his youth had served under Lootf Alee Khan, the last prince of the Zend family, during his final struggles to regain his throne. This veteran spoke of the unfortunate prince, with the enthusiasm with which I can imagine a Highlander who had witnessed the affair of "forty-five," would speak of "bonnie prince Charlie;" and exhibited more feeling than I should have given any Persian credit for possessing.

The character and career of Lootf Alee Khan, resemble in many points, those of the young Pretender. In personal character, abilities and courage, the Persian prince was as far superior to the Chevalier, as in his unquestionable right to the crown for which he contended: for with the exception of his gallant exterior, and the sympathy due to his misfortunes, Charlie Steuart had nothing, that I can discover, to recommend him. The military talents of Lootf Alee Khan were great, his courage indomitable, his conduct under misfortune was noble and dignified, and his heroic fortitude in bearing up against the most disastrous calamities, has never been sur-

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passed.* Charles Steuart was, by all unbiassed and authentic accounts, a very indifferent soldier, deficient in firmness and resolution; and his bravery in the field is at least very doubtful. In adversity, he behaved like a spoilt child; and his latter years were alike disgraceful to himself and to the race whence he sprung.

Both the Scottish and the Persian prince appear to have been occasionally wanting in prudence and foresight, and but too ready to lend an ear to pernicious counsel. The worst enemies of Lootf Alee Khan could not help admiring him. One day when news was brought to the usurper Agha Mahommed, that his nephew and heir Fat,h Alee had had several sons born to him by sundry of his numerous ladies, he exclaimed, "Would to God that one of them may resemble my former gallant opponent Lootf Alee Khan!" †

On the thirteenth of January, just before we left Sheerauz, the festival of Omar's assassination (*eidi omar kooshân*) took place. On this day, it

* Sir Harford Jones Brydges has given an interesting account of his last interview with this unfortunate prince after his retreat from Sheerauz where he had been betrayed by Hâjee Ibrahim; and says — "My respect, admiration, and love for this true Lion of War were such at that time, that I would cheerfully have devoted my life to his service."

† Lootf Alee Khan was grand-nephew of Kureem Khan, and his sole surviving heir. Had the fickle and faithless Persians entertained for him, one tithe of the devotion and fidelity which the Scottish Highlanders evinced towards the Pretender, the Kajars would never have gained the throne of Persia.

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is the practice of Sheeahs to make large images, something like our Guys on the fifth of November, of sticks and paper or any fragile materials, the insides of which are filled with bonbons. These effigies, intended to represent the obnoxious Khaleefa, are paraded about the town, and then torn and hacked to pieces, while there is a general scramble for the sweetmeats they contain. The prince made a great public feast for all his dependants, the harmony of which was enlivened by the humane spectacle of sundry bullfights, besides feats of jugglers and ropedancers, with fireworks at night. Some Persians suppose that any sins they may commit on this day — suicide, I believe, excepted — are not counted against them hereafter; and accordingly they have license to take their full swing of iniquity.

Mules having been hired, and everything got in readiness, I took leave of Feerooz Mirza, who furnished me with a *rakm* or order on the headmen of the different villages, calling on them to afford me what assistance I required; and quitted Sheerauz, in company with Mr. G., by the northern road, leading through the Tengi Allah Akbar. After passing through this defile, we proceeded by a rather rough and uneven road, over an undulating tract of country, perfectly bare and sterile; the little stream of Roknabad lying on one side of the way, for the first seven or eight miles. We next passed by a half-ruined caravansary in a gloomy brown valley; and con-

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tinued our route through equally unprepossessing scenery; a few ruinous buildings being the only signs of habitation. Crossing a low range of hills, we encountered a shower of snow, which softened into sleet and finally into rain; so that on reaching the town or village of Zargoon, the state of the weather induced us to halt and pass the night there.

Zargoon, or more correctly Zarckân, is a large populous village, about seventeen miles distant from Sheerauz. It lies at the foot of a chain of high rocks; is not surrounded with any wall; and most of the houses are of unburnt bricks, plastered with mud, raised upon stone foundations, and flat roofed. We got into the upper room of a small caravansary, where we soon made ourselves comfortable, opposite to a blazing wood fire. During the last three years, the people here have suffered much from the ravages of locusts, which have destroyed a great portion of their crops every year; and on this account, many have quitted their homes, to seek their fortune elsewhere.

We left Zargoon next morning, and turning the corner of the range of rocks, came upon a low swampy plain, seemingly of great extent. A substantial causeway of stone leads over a great part of this level ground, which would otherwise be impassable in wet weather —

"There's a bower of roses by Bendemeer's stream
And the nightingale sings round it all the day long."

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singeth Tom Moore, with the usual license of the gentry of Parnassus, whose muse's gambols lead them astray in the flowery regions of fancy. A less promising place for roses and nightingales, I never witnessed. This same Bendemeer is a deep, dark, turbid, and particularly ugly river, passing through a country in no way remarkable for beauty or verdure, and as little likely to be the chosen spot for Philomel and her beloved flower, as any place I wot of. We crossed its calm waves, which much resemble liquid mud, by a very steep and rather narrow stone bridge of three arches, and entered the broad plain of Mervdasht.

The Bendemeer river derives its name from a village so called, about six or seven miles eastward of this bridge; where there is a large embankment (*bund*) made by a famous chief (*ameer*) in former times; who, the grandson of a poor fisherman, made himself sovereign of all southern Persia. The river is formed by the junction of two others; which unite just above the bridge: one of these streams is the Koor or Kom-feerooz, anciently called the Araxes*, which rises about twenty miles to the westward; and the other is the Polvâr, rising some fifty miles to the northward, among the mountains. The bridge by

* There were two other rivers, bearing this name in ancient times. One in Armenia, falling into the Caspian, now called the Arras: and the other in Mesopotamia, joining the Euphrates, now called the Khaboor.

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which we crossed, named Pooli Khân, is about fourteen miles from Zargoon.

The plain of Mervdasht appears to be nearly, if not quite, as extensive as the vale of Sheerauz, and like it, is covered in most places with the wild liquorice and camel-thorn. There are numerous villages on this plain, and some cultivation, but not one tithe of what there might be under proper management; for this valley is well watered and evidently fertile. Our progress was rendered slow and troublesome, by the numerous deep watercourses, which intersect the plain; and which are crossed by small narrow wooden bridges, situated at long intervals, and not easily found by anyone who does not know where to look for them. After we had advanced three or four miles, the tall columns of Persepolis were visible at the foot of a distant hill; and late in the afternoon, we reached the village of Kinaureh, about a mile and a half distant from the Takhti Jemsheed (throne of Jemsheed) the principal part of the remains of Persepolis. In this village we were to take up our quarters. While our servants went to prepare lodgings and get ready our dinner, we rode on to Jemsheed's throne, and amused ourselves by inspecting it for an hour or two, when approaching darkness warned us to return; and we were obliged, somewhat reluctantly, to postpone further examination, just as we began to be deeply interested in these vast remains of Persia's pride. These

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famous ruins are about thirty-five miles distant from Sheerauz, lying north-east.

We found lodgings got ready for us in a double room upstairs, in one of the largest houses in the village. The two rooms communicating together by a doorway, formed a *balakhoneh*, with a flat roof above. The mud walls, which were very thick, had numerous niches for depositing articles in, and small triangular apertures by way of windows.

Kinaureh is a large populous village, with a walled orchard attached to it; and the inhabitants keep abundance of cattle.

It rained heavily all night; and next day our expectations of sight-seeing were completely frustrated by rain, which lasted till after sunset. This was succeeded by a keen frost at night, and on the following morning, the saturated plain was frozen crisp and hard. The weather was perfectly fine; and after an early breakfast we sallied forth, directing our course towards the Takhti Jemsheed.

END OF VOL. I.

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